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Local Government Service

JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

No. 10 VOL. XXV

OCTOBER 1948

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TRADE UNIONS' TASK TO-DAY

AMIDST the clash of economic controversy heard at the Trades Union Congress and elsewhere, one note of agreement may be distinguished: we must produce more. From Right to Left of the schools of political thought, all concur in the view that if more and better goods and services are provided, all classes will stand to benefit. There are differences of view about the division of the additional product, but all wish to see it come into being. Other remedies—or at least palliatives—for our current ills may be advocated in one quarter and criticised in another, but on the desirability of raising the total national income no argument is now to be heard. It should scarcely be necessary to add that, in local government, the national income may be raised indirectly by doing jobs with smaller expenditure of manpower and materials.

Agreement—But Inaction

There is almost equally widespread agreement that, if production is to be raised to its maximum, there must be organised and united efforts to that end on the part of all employers and workers—or, in our own world, councillors and their staffs. So far, however, progress in establishing the joint consultative machinery through which such united and organised effort was to be made both in industry and in the public service has been disappointing. A recent Ministry of Labour report states that only 38 industries out of 54 have even examined the subject, and only 23 have set up machinery.

Deep-rooted among the obstacles lie the beliefs among the workers (local government officers not excepted) that efficiency is a matter for the management and that a man who produces more than he must may "work himself out of a job." These fallacies—for such they are—are closely examined in six studies of *British Trade Unionism* issued by P.E.P. (Political and Economic Planning, 15s.). What is lacking, say the authors, is confidence—confidence on the part of the worker that co-operation with the employer to raise efficiency and production will redound to his advantage and not only to that of the boss, and will not bring his job to an end; confidence that the division of the national income will give him a fair share; confidence that, if as a nation we must suffer economic hardships, they shall be borne by all classes alike; and confidence that his trade union will in all respects reflect his interests and fight his battles.

MISS FLORENCE HANCOCK, in her presidential address to the Trades Union Congress, deplored the hostility of employers' organisations to joint production machinery, and she was no doubt justified in her complaint. In the minds of many employers, the prospect of sharing responsibility for the welfare of "their" industry, especially with those whom they employ, arouses intense antagonism. But in local government we have little means of

knowing what would be the attitude of individual authorities or of their associations, for we have not yet effectively raised the matter from our own ranks. That NALGO members care for the efficiency of local government is proved by such activities as the Association's public relations work and the reports of its war-time Reconstruction Committee. Conference, too, has recorded its belief in the value of joint machinery for improving working methods, but so far this has remained a paper resolution.

If the worker can be brought to see that the expansion of production will redound to his advantage and cannot involve redundancy so long as full employment is maintained, his psychological adjustment to his economic environment will be eased. But perhaps even more fundamental is the need for him to retain his faith in his own trade union. If this instrument created for his protection cannot be relied upon, the worker's confidence is sapped.

NALGO members will have observed the unreal distinction some draw between the Association and themselves. When a difficulty arises, they tend to say, not "What shall we do about it?" but, "What will NALGO do about it?" For to many, NALGO is something outside themselves, remote, even uncontrollable and possibly, on occasion, antagonistic. If pressed, they would admit that their Association was their own creature, directed by their own nominees, answerable to themselves for its policy, but this conception is seldom in their conscious minds. We forget that NALGO is ourselves.

Three-Tier Membership

This phenomenon, common to most trade unions, forms the theme of a substantial part of the P.E.P. study. The authors divide trade union membership into three levels; the top tier of executive members and permanent officers; the middle tier of branch officials and other active elements; and the third tier, which plays little part in union affairs.

The first tier (with which P.E.P. shows special sympathy) exercises responsible functions, sees union problems from the broadest point of view, and may err on the side of safety-first. The middle tier includes the enthusiasts, many of whom will become the leaders of to-morrow; politically, this stratum is often in advance both of the union leaders and of the rank-and-file. The third tier will remain placid for long periods but may burst into revolt (under leaders from the middle tier or thrown up for the occasion) over some unremedied grievance which the top tier fails to appreciate. These, P.E.P. argues, are the circumstances of unofficial strikes, which derive not from some satirical streak in the workers but from lack of unity of thought and feeling between leaders and led.

Upon the quality of the links between these tiers depends the democratic character of the union. In the ideal, executive members and head office officials should be in constant personal touch with branches and every member should, by regular attendance at meetings, play his part in creating a branch policy—in turn

to become part of national policy, truly reflective of the general interest. Difficulties of time and money make such an ideal unrealisable, but the nearer any union comes to achieving it the greater will be its internal cohesion and hence its power for the good of its members. It is not (as is often assumed) only that the national leader needs to refresh his ideals by contact with the rank and file; the latter may also benefit by contact with men and women whose duty it is to take a wide view and whose experience teaches them difficulties not always visible from the parish pump.

The Difficult Years

Such inner cohesion is particularly essential to a union which, like NALGO to-day, is going through a difficult period of re-adaptation to new conditions. It is not yet three years since we secured a national Charter revolutionising for many members (and for many local authorities, too) the standards of salary and service conditions, and the machinery by which those standards are settled. Yet in those years, during which we have been applying and seeking to improve the Charter, we have had to undertake many other arduous tasks. We have absorbed back into local government between thirty and forty thousand members whose careers had been disrupted by service in the Forces. We have recruited an additional 40,000 members, many of them from fields outside local government and with little experience of trade unionism. We have had to help create, from the bottom up, negotiating machinery for the new State-controlled electricity, gas, and hospital services, often in co-operation with other unions with differing traditions and methods and with whom we have not worked before. We have had to begin the adaptation of our own internal structure to meet the needs of new members, interests, and conditions. We have had to cope with an unprecedented volume of legislation, much of it vitally affecting the livelihood and interests of our members. We have had to expand staff to more than double its former strength. And we have had to do all this when our members have been pre-occupied by personal problems.

In these circumstances it is not surprising that the Association should have come in for a certain amount of criticism from a minority of its members. What is surprising is that the volume and weight of the criticism should have been so small, and that we should have preserved our unity as well as we have done. But we still have many difficulties to overcome, and it is essential, if we are to succeed, for all ranks of NALGO to strive to understand one another; for the leaders to maintain contact with the rank and file; for the rank and file to listen to the views of the leaders.

It is the aim of "Local Government Service" to encourage the fullest freedom of opinion and expression within the Association. Unless the fact is expressly stated, therefore, views put forward in this journal—whether in the editorial columns or in signed articles—should not necessarily be regarded as expressing the considered policy of the Association.

Keener Bargaining, Livelier Debate, and a Broader Outlook are What NALGO Needs

By "CRITIC"

INDULGENCE in retrospect is a habit of the holiday season and it has lured me into doing a little NALGO stock-taking. These are my findings :

Thirty-five years ago, the service conditions policy of NALGO was its life-blood, even as it is today, and, although few of us would admit to an interest in the conditions of that time, most would add to their sense of proportion by reflecting on the salaries (or were they wages ?) then paid to local government officers.

The two extremes of the rank-and-file were the office boy and the chief clerk. The former was usually recruited at fourteen and, at the end of his first week's work, proudly took home five or six shillings. If he happened to be a secondary school boy who had stayed at school until sixteen, most probably by virtue of his parents' sacrifices, he may have received the lordly sum of 8s. 6d. a week. The man at the other end of the scale may have reached, with more than usual luck and some patronage, a point in the scale between £130 and £150. In 1918, the typical reward of a chief clerk after a lifetime of service in, let us say, the finance department of a large county borough, was £2 10s. a week.

These figures will doubtless provoke the rejoinder that the cost of living is higher today or that the purchasing power of money was much greater in those days. That may be so, but do not let us forget that for the great majority of our predecessors there was no superannuation ; the 38-hour week was practically unknown ; holidays were a week or ten days for the junior and a fortnight for the adult ; sick pay schemes, where they existed at all, varied in their niggardliness ; and increments were seldom automatic. Many an old officer will recall the annual begging letters that he wrote to his employing committee, and which secured him an increase of a shilling a week if he were lucky, or even two shillings if he had a sufficient number of friends on the council.

Pioneer Victories

This, then, was the legacy handed to NALGO in the difficult post-war years of 1919 and 1920, when the Association was re-building its membership after its drop from 21,000 in 1912 to 12,000 in 1919. Soon afterwards the cost of living rose steeply, and dissatisfaction with their conditions led many officers, hitherto caring little for trade union methods, to join the swelling ranks of NALGO. With a modest central organisation and no national negotiating machinery it gained many successes in its claims for a war bonus and, whilst the results were uneven, they represented the first major victory for NALGO in the field of service conditions. Let us remember with gratitude the persistent efforts of scores of local honorary officers and branch executives in fighting and finally overcoming the opposition of the authorities. By 1924, the average salary of clerical workers in the service had risen to £170, or 70 per cent more than at the end of the 1914-18 war.

The subsequent triumphs of NALGO in securing compulsory superannuation and in establishing the first provincial Whitley councils need no re-telling, but the spirit of those pioneers who made these things possible should be an inspiration to NALGO negotiators in the future. Nowadays, we take for granted the privilege of retiring on pension at 60 or 65, but the veteran who had nothing else to which he could look forward except an old age pension

of five shillings, hailed it with thanksgiving.

Conference last June was unusually quiet about superannuation ; neither floor nor platform had a moment to spare for it. But no member of NALGO can afford to neglect the topic, and it is to be hoped that the N.E.C. will give some serious thought to it during the coming months. Opinion from the floor of Conference on the question of making provision for widows in an amending Act would have given a valuable lead to the N.E.C., and the advantages of such a scheme are so obvious that it is surprising that it has remained somnolent for so long. Branch and district committee officers searching for a provocative item for their next agenda need seek no further. They can be assured of an interesting discussion, particularly if some courageous member will point out at an early stage that the local authorities may not be willing to shoulder the financial burden and that the price of the amendment will be a substantially increased contribution by the officer to his superannuation fund.

Constructive Controversy Needed

Many branch executive and district committee meeting agendas suffer from the paucity of items suitable for discussion. It is not unusual to find in them nothing but circulars from the general secretary and reports of a number of more or less important sub-committees. Such items are necessary, of course, but should we not be encouraged and stimulated by a rousing argument on some worthwhile motion of topical interest ? Why could we not discuss "Co-operation with other trades unions concerned with the local government service" ; the question, "Is the appeals machinery working satisfactorily?" or some other topical matter ? Out of discussions on subjects such as these would almost certainly come constructive and important proposals for the N.E.C. and Conference. Too many motions on the Bournemouth agenda were either destructive or unimportant. Fortunately, most of them were given short shrift and shorter time.

Conversely, the motion on affiliation to the T.U.C. was given too generous a slice of the time-table. We bore with much patience the same arguments to which we had often listened before, and yet there must have been few present who had not accurately forecast the result of the debate long before it began. Each had received his instructions, and on such a contentious issue no amount of persuasive speech-making could have affected the vote.

Let us hope that the result of the ballot, whatever it is, will be accepted as the policy of the Association for many years to come. If it favours affiliation, we shall affiliate, but if it rejects it, what then ? Are the same old arguments to be brought up again next June at the Aberdeen Conference, culminating perhaps in a demand for another ballot ? Heaven forbid !

Big Tasks Ahead

What of the immediate future ? The national and provincial Whitley councils will remain our sheet anchor. They must be kept in tip-top condition, but not overworked, for, if they are, they cannot survive. Steady progress must be maintained, and whilst the N.E.C. must conscientiously interpret and implement the instructions of Conference, our representatives on the staff sides of the joint councils must have full liberty to determine their own

tactics. Bargaining between the two sides is the essential factor in joint negotiation. If we regard our members only as delegates and attempt to give them specific instructions, we cannot blame the employers if they seek to do the same. But such action would have fatal results for the Whitley machinery. We cannot all serve, so we must trust those we elect.

There are several problems of first-rate importance awaiting solution by the National Joint Council. They include the ironing-out of anomalies created by the arbitration award, the adjustment of the scale of annual leave, the formulation of salary scales between £700 and £1,000, and that vexed question of exemptions from the promotion examination. There is good reason to believe that many local authorities are dissatisfied with the first list of examinations recognised for promotion purposes, particularly in regard to the attitude of the Local Government Examinations Board to the intermediate examinations of certain professional bodies. They are also disturbed about the double requirement—15 years' service and attainment of the age of 35—necessary before an officer who has not passed the promotion examination can be considered eligible for limited promotion. Neglect of these matters may well bring the education policy of the Charter into general disrepute, force more and more authorities to disregard some of its provisions, and create a situation which, in the long run, will be detrimental to the best interests of both officers and employers.

The examinations board has done some good work. It is right to regard an educated service as an essential, but it must keep a sense of proportion in legislating for the rank-and-file officer who cannot achieve £500 a year (£400 for women) under the present scales. One provincial council has already expressed itself strongly against restrictions on promotion ; similar action by others would compel the Examinations Board and National Joint Council to reconsider the whole problem.

Whitley Council Defects

It is the duty of the national and provincial councils to take joint action for the consideration of the matters which come before them, but there seems to be a growing tendency for both sides to settle their respective policies independently, and come together only to place their demands on the table. Separate preliminary meetings are inevitable and desirable, but NALGO must guard against being a party to any "take it or leave it" attitude. Rigid discipline and strict adherence to the practice of leaving the talking to one spokesman for each side can also be overdone. Such bad habits are a negation of Whitleyism, and if, in fact, they prevail on the N.J.C. the sooner we get back to the round-table conference the better. Members of the national joint council, whether employer or employed, are not naughty boys to be seen but not heard !

All these considerations are equally applicable to the nationalised services ; and the members of the national councils for those services would be wise to profit from the experience and mistakes of the older bodies.

Last month a warning was given of the burden which every NALGO worker is called upon to bear. Have we heeded it ? We exist by virtue of our bread and butter policy ; more power to our leaders in their kneading and churning !

How NALGO's Field Force Grapples With Each Threat to Members' Interests

In this, the fourth of our series of articles describing the Association's activities, W. CECIL WOOD, district officer in the North West, describes the work of one of the 12 district offices in organising members and aiding and representing them on the spot.

WHEN I joined the Association's "field" staff twelve years ago, it consisted of six "divisional organising secretaries," or "D.O.s" as they were called at that time—and still are by some of the older members.

Today, the senior officer of each district is known as the "district officer," or "D.O.," whilst his junior colleague is called assistant district officer, or "A.D.O."

There are now twelve D.O.s and 13 A.D.O.s, of whom three are supernumerary and allocated at present to the Manchester, Birmingham, and London offices to help out in the North, the Midlands, and the South, respectively.

There is one district office in each district committee area, and it is the duty of each district officer to look after NALGO's affairs in that area. There is, however, some overlapping due to the dissimilarity between the regional boundaries of the new nationalised services and the district areas. Thus, an electricity branch falling geographically within one district may be attached to a neighbouring district—covering the electricity board area to which that branch's undertaking belongs.

Whilst each district has many problems in common with the others, its work varies according to its size, its membership, the number of branches it contains, and the extent to which its branches and members make use of it.

Link Between Member and H.Q.

The D.O. and his staff, like all other officers of the Association, are answerable to the Association's National Executive Council, and, according to a pronouncement approved by Conference in 1946, are not subject to instructions from district committees or branches. Their position is, however, a delicate one, for they must always act in full co-operation with both district and branch so far as they are able and so long as they do not contravene national policy. In other words, they operate a service for handling matters at local and district level and forge a direct link between the member and the branch on the one hand, and between Headquarters and the N.E.C. on the other.

Most problems affecting members make their impact on the district office first. Here, every effort is made to settle them, but, failing success, the D.O. may, if he deems it necessary or desirable, refer them to national level. He is able to give immediate advice, or a ruling if required, on almost any problem submitted to him. Such a faculty is acquired by experience of similar cases, by knowledge derived through many official contacts, by a study of official reports and documents, or by a combination of two or all of such factors. Irrespective of the length of his NALGO service, the D.O. learns something new about his work every day of his working life.

There is a direct link between the district office and the legal department at Headquarters. The appeal to the pensions tribunal on behalf of the widow of an officer whose disability had been aggravated by war service—the case was reported in "L.G.S." last month—was conducted by an A.D.O. He obtained evidence from many witnesses and kept in touch with the case until it was successfully concluded.

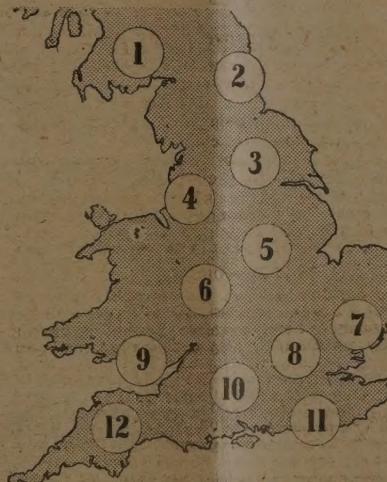
Some idea, though an incomplete one, of

the D.O.'s service to members may be gained from the following facts and figures relating to my own district—the North Western and North Wales District. My colleagues in other districts would have a similar story to tell.

The area of my territory is some 7,300 square miles. It embraces ten counties, including Anglesey—four in the north-west of England and six in North Wales—and the Isle of Man. Within it are ten county councils, 22 county boroughs, 54 non-county boroughs, 125 urban

D.O.s—and Where they Work

The photographs on our cover are of the officers in charge of the twelve NALGO districts: 1. J. L. ROBSON, Scotland; 2. G. HOOD, North Eastern; 3. J. C. HAMILTON, Yorkshire; 4. W. CECIL WOOD, North Western and North Wales;



5. W. J. UPTON, East Midland; 6. J. MELVIN, West Midland; 7. J. R. E. SABINE, Eastern; 8. A. H. GEARY, Metropolitan; 9. I. G. ELLIS, South Wales; 10. D. H. J. NEWMAN, Southern; 11. ALAN PROCKTOR, South Eastern; 12. F. SIGNY, South Western.

districts, and 58 rural districts. Two electricity divisions and area boards, and two regional hospital boards, lie wholly within it, and two further hospital board areas lie partly within it. Then there are a number of *ad hoc* authorities, joint boards, and the like, a substantial number of gas companies, and a company-owned transport undertaking.

At present, the membership is about 30,000; it is organised in 147 branches, some with fewer than 20 members, and others, like Manchester and Liverpool, with between three and four thousand each.

District Committee Liaison

Owing to the size of the territory administered and incidental problems, such as travelling, the district has set up two sub-committees, one representative of all branches in North Wales, and another of all branches in North Lancashire, Cumberland, and Westmorland. Each sub-committee meets three or four times

a year to discuss district problems and organise sports competitions, week-end schools, and so on.

In addition, the district committee appoints nine sub-committees for finance and general purposes, the Benevolent fund, education, sports, public relations, and electricity, gas, transport, and hospital services. Most meet quarterly, or more frequently, and are invariably attended by the D.O. or his assistant.

At each quarterly meeting of the district committee, the D.O. presents detailed progress reports on the work of his district and of the various provincial Whitley councils of which he is staff side secretary. As part of my own duties as D.O., I hold the secretoryship of two provincial joint councils for local authorities' staffs, two district joint councils for electricity administrative and clerical grades, and two regional councils for gas staffs. The administrative and clerical work arising from each appointment is substantial, though not a major part of my job.

Many Additional Jobs

The twelve district office staffs vary in strength according to the size and membership of the district they serve. At Manchester, in addition to the D.O., there are two A.D.O.s, a "supernumerary" A.D.O. who may be called upon to assist in any of three adjoining districts, and three clerk-typists.

N.E.C. elections—involving the receipt of nominations, the preparation, printing and despatch to branches of voting papers and envelopes, and their subsequent return, in various-sized lots, to the district office—often coincide with a period of stress in other directions. Add to them a casual vacancy on the N.E.C. and a general ballot of members, such as that recently concluded for affiliation to the Trades Union Congress, and you have examples of the additional jobs which the district staff are expected to take in their stride. One wonders at times how the structure can bear the strain.

100 Miles Travel Every Day!

Postages, a fairly sound guide to the size of the outgoing mail, amounted to £80 during the first six months of the current year in my district alone—an average of more than £3 a week.

The district office telephone line is probably one of the busiest in town as many branch secretaries know to their sorrow. Trunk calls are avoided as much as possible, yet my office telephone account for the last six months was more than £60, or about £2 6s. a week.

The total distance that we in Manchester travelled by car from January to June last, in reaching meetings, interviews, negotiating committees, and so on, was approximately 16,000 miles, or more than 100 miles each working day. That is some guide to the time spent in traversing the district to grapple with members' problems.

During the past eighteen months, no fewer than 1,893 grading appeals have been presented to the appeals committees of the two provincial joint councils of which I am staff side secretary, although at no time were there more than two officers available for such work. Most of the appellants were interviewed personally, some more than once. Most were represented at both local and provincial level. Several hundred appeals were submitted at Liverpool alone during the current year.

Since the introduction of the Charter, the joint secretaries of the provincial council have shared the responsibility of grading the staffs of some 40 local authorities, involving some 3,000 officers.

Here is an extract from my diary of appointments for a recent week :

Monday—discussions with employers' secretary; interview with an officer of another union regarding grading appeals; *Tuesday*—meeting of appeals committee all day; journey to North Wales; *Wednesday*—interviews all day; *Thursday*—appeals committee at Colwyn Bay; travel back to Manchester; *Friday*—appeals committee all day; and *Saturday*—quarterly meeting of district committee.

And here is another, doubtless equally typical of other districts :

Monday—meeting of 'district electricity joint council and executive committee'; journey to London for evening meeting; *Tuesday*—meeting of local authorities' staffs joint council and back to Manchester; *Wednesday*—executive committee of district electricity council at Liverpool; *Thursday*—interview with town clerk of a borough council; *Friday*—appeals committee; and *Saturday*—office.

Since many of the meetings which a D.O. must attend are held when other people are off duty, the D.O. and his staff inherit many hours of evening and week-end work. During the first six months of this year, I and my assistants attended 41 meetings of branches and district committees, 59 meetings of joint councils and appeals committees, and 48 meetings of local authority committees. In addition, we conducted 270 interviews in various parts of the district. It all added up to an average of rather more than one meeting each working day, plus about ten interviews each week.

To conclude and to illustrate both the variety of the work and the patience, persistence, and good humour that a successful D.O. must bring to it, I quote the following extracts from my colleagues' and my own case books :

1. Two mental welfare workers with many years' service in a voluntary organisation were absorbed by a mental hospital board some two years ago. On the inception of the National Health Service on July 5 last, the Board was dissolved, leaving the two women concerned with no alternative employment or title to pension or compensation. They sought advice, and, happily for them, the D.O.'s representations gained for them fresh employment suited to their long and valuable experience.

2. The famous "Bingley" case, now merely a matter of historical record, will go down in the annals of the Association as the only case in which a sheriff's officer visited a local authority to make a seizure of council property. Such action was taken in execution of High Court judgments given against the council in favour of officers on war service who had not been paid sums due to them under an Award of the National Arbitration Tribunal. The preparation of the statements of claim, in infinite detail, was a heavy burden for the D.O. and his one girl clerk.

3. Travelling by car is not all honey. During the war, when major repairs took a long time, one D.O., spurning the services of a garage, carried in the boot of his car two petrol-tins filled with water. From these he re-filled his radiator every few miles. Recently, when a D.O. and his assistant were on a long cross-country journey, the flexible hose which joins radiator and engine jacket suddenly burst. Darkness was rapidly approaching, and the nearest garage miles away, but thanks to finding part of a motor-cycle inner tube and borrowing a couple of hose clips from a farmer who took them off his tractor, the car proceeded on its way under its own steam, with driver and passenger, dirty and fed-up, reaching the

nearest hostelry five minutes after closing time. Another D.O., travelling in the black-out, found himself driving through flood-water beneath a railway bridge. The engine stalled at once, and flooded with water. So the D.O. waded ashore, salvaged the car, and found himself, shortly afterwards, acting as the Association's advocate before a committee of austere councillors. A fourth D.O., travelling in thick fog in a new district, took a wrong turning and, after proceeding some twelve miles at a walking pace, discovered that he was on the road to Liverpool and not to Manchester, as he had intended. Two hours later, he was back where he started and he did not reach home till early the next morning.

4. In the course of his travels, the D.O. has often to stay overnight at hotels at which the standard of accommodation varies considerably. Not long ago, one of my colleagues had booked a room at a small seaside hotel. To while away an hour or so after an appointment, he accepted an invitation to spend the evening with a local councillor. Returning to his hotel at 11.15 p.m. he found it

locked up for the night and, despite ringing the bell, kicking the door, telephoning from a kiosk nearby, and soliciting a policeman's aid, he was unable to get in. However, two soldiers, hearing of his plight, invited him to share their billet for the night. It turned out to be an empty compartment in a train standing at the pier head. There he dozed fitfully until 4.30 a.m., when the railway staff arrived to prepare the train for an early journey.

5. District office accommodation is not always what the D.O.—or the N.E.C. for that matter—would like it to be. In one district the D.O.'s office and dwelling-rooms are in the same building. The morning post is opened and read over early tea, and most of the answers are ready by the time the typist arrives. Such an arrangement has many advantages, but the obvious disadvantage that he may be called on at all hours of the day and night. Another colleague tells how he was awakened by the telephone at 1.30 a.m., leapt out of bed, hurried downstairs, lifted the receiver, and was greeted by a voice asking the date of the next district committee meeting!

Hands Off Women's Committees—They are Doing Well in North-West!

A motion before NALGO's national women's services sub-committee on September 4 to "consider the disbandment" of that sub-committee was heavily defeated. One speaker against the motion, Miss M. TOWNSON, N.E.C., and chairman of the North-Western and North Wales women's services committee, tells below what women in her district have done.

WHO said "Abolish women's committees"? Certainly no one in NALGO's North-Western district, for such committees have done fine work there.

Let me give an example. At Salford, after an address on "Careers for Women," given by a member of the district women's sub-committee, three general division women lifted themselves from the rut and found more satisfying work. Each had worked for years in the same corporation department without the slightest prospect of promotion. Each would most likely have stayed where she was had not the women's committee opened her eyes. Two transferred to the housing department to become welfare visitors; they have already passed their first examination, and are half-way to a qualification. Their new work brought them into touch with social conditions of which they had never dreamt before; it gave them a new outlook and a new purpose. The third, a comptometer operator for 20 years, got a post in the education department. She thoroughly enjoys her new job and is studying for the promotion examination. To hear her speak, as I have heard her, of the new life opened to her through her job, is to know that this work is well worth while.

Finding Women Branch Officers

Lest this simple illustration fail to convince the sceptics, let me add that we have increased NALGO's membership in the district and much improved members' knowledge of, and thus respect for, the Association. We have explained just how and why trade unions were started; how the Charter was devised; and how the Whitley system works. As a result, women have become secretaries, assistant secretaries, and assistant treasurers to branches and members of local joint committees.

We have talked education; seen branch education committees set up. We have encouraged members to study, and have closely followed their progress. We have sought to create an enlightened membership, from which to train negotiators not only for local government branches, but for the new utility and health branches too. Today, it is important as never before for women to be active in health service branches.

In this work, women speakers have played a great part. Not only have they talked to meetings of women for the past three years, but have also, occasionally, addressed audiences of both men and women.

In the past, women may have been reluctant to lend hand in trade union work and to accept the obligations which such work entails. But today they are keen to do so not only in their own interests but for the good of all.

Our aim is not partisan. We make it clear whenever possible that women must, in their trade union life, accept the same conditions and responsibilities as men. Only by working together for the common good can they hope to break down the prejudice in men's minds that they are motivated by self-interest only. It has been said that men trust men to negotiate for them; that women trust men to negotiate; but that men will not, as yet, trust women. I say emphatically that the sex of the negotiator matters not one jot—ability to negotiate is what counts.

The revival—for such it is—in women's interest in NALGO gathered speed in the North-West when, at Preston two years ago, the district women's committee held an autumn conference of women representatives of branches.

It opened with an address by the district officer on his work, and gave delegates a chance to compare their achievements and failures. It was followed the next year by another conference at Liverpool, when an officer from another district explained the appeals procedure and told members how he could best help and advise them. At that meeting delegates were urged to form their own committees, to educate other women in committee procedure, and to take their share of the routine work done in every branch. They were told that NALGO owed its vigour and growth to voluntary work in the past done largely by men, that, whilst the Association had a staff of trained experts, its present need of good branch work was greater than ever, and that women could expect equality only if they were prepared to do their share of that work. They were asked to tell their members about NALGO's policy and history, and the district women's committee promised to help by sending speakers to address branches and by giving advice and guidance at any time.

I have told you a little of what happened at Salford. Manchester's story is much the same. It started a women's committee this year and arranged for a series of six lectures on careers for women, illustrated by films, to be held during the winter. The hall reserved will seat 150, but this is not large enough for all who want to attend.

Liverpool's committee is active, and recently 180 women attended a meeting to discuss problems arising out of the Charter. Wallasey and Birkenhead have revived women's committees and each has held meetings attended by more than 100, resulting again in increased membership.

The same story could be told of Blackpool, Blackburn, Preston, and many others.

Women's committee work consists of service conditions, public relations, and education—all contributing to the betterment of NALGO as a whole. So let us hear no more about abolishing women's committees!

CAN WE ADEQUATELY REPRESENT HEALTH STAFFS?

"I Want Proof of It"

SAYS J. P. LEWIS, D.P.A., A.C.C.S., medical superintendent's senior clerk, Withington Hospital, Manchester, and member of the executive committee of the Manchester branch.

IN this debate an enthusiastic yet critical member puts searching questions to a leader of the Association who is also a specialist in health staffs' conditions and problems:

LEWIS : What proportion of the 36,596 members who joined NALGO during the last two years, when recruitment should have been heavy, were drawn from the health services?

BEVAN : Our returns do not disclose the exact number—but last June it was estimated that we had 14,000 health service members, and the total is higher to-day and is increasing rapidly. A number of exclusively health service branches have been formed, including those for:

Kings College Hospital, London; Glasgow and district health service; Leeds hospitals; Metropolitan regional hospital board; Oxford city hospitals; St. Heller management committee; South West Essex health services; Temple Grove (dental estimates board); and Winwick hospital officers.

LEWIS : Of the 72 seats on the N.E.C., how many are held by health service staffs? Does the proportion correspond with the health service membership?

BEVAN : If by "health service staffs" is meant the staffs of the organisation recently set up under the National Health Service Act, the answer is three—a hospital steward, a hospital matron, and myself. If local authorities' health services are included, there are three more—a superintendent, children's home and hospital, a deputy M.O.H., and a chief sanitary inspector. Thus the health staffs, numbering approximately one in twelve of the Association's membership, have six out of 72—or exactly the same proportion—of members on the N.E.C. But this is fortuitous only; the N.E.C. is elected to represent the membership as a whole. Members themselves both nominate and elect those they wish to represent them, and there is no sectional representation. Sectional interests are safeguarded by the appointment of consultative committees at both regional and national levels.

Our Share of Staff Seats

LEWIS : Since NALGO has only one-twelfth and one-ninth of the seats on the staff sides of the professional and technical functional councils A and B, respectively, what encouragement to join NALGO is there for potential members already represented by their professional associations? And what possibility of keeping existing members? The joint negotiating committee for almoners and pharmacists was thought to have failed to standardise service conditions because it had no NALGO representation, until the joint negotiating committee for medical laboratory technicians, on which NALGO was represented, also failed. Staffs take a greater interest in organisations catering for them professionally and encouraging the discussion of matters of common interest, including salaries and conditions.

BEVAN : Whilst it is true that NALGO's representation on Councils A and B is small, the same applies to that of other organisations on the staff side. Sixteen organisations share 24 seats on the former, yet NALGO has two; and none has more than NALGO on the latter. The Association does not regard as satisfactory the scales adopted for medical laboratory technicians, but they are a great improvement on earlier rates:

NALGO had only a minority representation on the council governing their interests and it would be fairer to compare the position of almoners and pharmacists with that of local government officers, a field in which NALGO has an overwhelming majority. Here, conditions have been standardised at a high level. The professional bodies should be regarded not as competing with, but as complementary to, NALGO. Their duty is to protect professional standards, improve their members' status, and attend to training problems. NALGO is better equipped for trade union work and, given the support of the hospital and health staffs, it will win for them results as satisfactory as those it has won for local government officers.

A Council for Dentists?

LEWIS : If NALGO has no seats on councils representing doctors, dentists, opticians, and pharmacists, what inducement is there for those professions to join it?

BEVAN : No council has yet been formed for doctors, but the Association has had talks with other interested organisations and has claimed representation on any council which may be set up. No council has been formed for dentists because their professional associations have refused to participate: but since many public dental officers in NALGO wish to participate and to be represented by the Association, steps are being taken in an endeavour to meet their wishes. NALGO did not seek seats on the councils for opticians or pharmacists because it had few in membership, but if they join the Association for the benefit of its experience in joint negotiation, it can rightfully claim seats.

LEWIS : Nurses and midwives are catered for by a council on which NALGO has only one-tenth of the seats. Has the union which claims such a big share in the recommendations made by the now disbanded Rushcliffe committee suddenly fallen into disfavour, or has it allowed professional organisations to push it into the background?

BEVAN : Neither! NALGO was never in a majority on the nurses' panel of the Rushcliffe committee, where it occupied only three out of 19 seats. Its influence was such, however, that one of its representatives was chairman of the panel throughout the whole life of the committee. To-day, although it has only four out of 41 seats, one of its representatives is chairman of the staff side of the functional council and, another, chairman of the staff side of its executive committee—two of the most important posts on the council. There has been no transfer of loyalty from NALGO to professional bodies—which have always had the largest membership among nurses. Here again, however, a proper division of professional and union functions would benefit the profession.

Good Friends With I.H.A.

LEWIS : It is noteworthy that Mr. Bryn Roberts, chairman of the administrative and clerical council, and Mr. S. R. Speller, its secretary, are both members of the Institute of Hospital Administrators.

BEVAN : Mr. Roberts is not a member of the I.H.A. though Mr. Speller is its secretary. NALGO is on excellent terms with the Institute, which is represented on its joint

"I Give That Proof"

SAYS LEWIS BEVAN, N.E.C., clerk & steward, Hensol Castle, M.D. Colony, former staff-side leader of the local government N.J.C., and member of the general council of the health N.J.C.s.

consultative committee of professional and technical organisations. Though its representatives are not officers of the council, NALGO has six seats on the staff side—"more than the I.H.A. or any other body—and by virtue of its rising membership will exercise growing influence in the council.

LEWIS : What has been done to recruit staffs of former voluntary hospitals and why has the Federation of Hospital Officers—a new union without representation on the functional councils—been able to enrol members?

BEVAN : Leaflets have been circulated and a new one is now being printed to appeal to the staffs both of former voluntary and former local authority hospitals. The Association's district staff has been expanded, and is being further expanded to help recruitment in the health field. I know no reason why any health service officer should prefer to join the Federation of Hospital Officers which is an unnecessary addition to the unions already in this sphere.

LEWIS : How can NALGO claim to play a prominent part in gaining adequate salaries and conditions when other organisations are, individually or collectively, more adequately represented on the functional councils that settle such matters?

BEVAN : NALGO's representation equals or exceeds that of any other trade union—as distinct from a professional organisation—on each of the four councils upon which it has seats. By weight of numbers alone, disregarding the negotiating skill of its members, it can therefore claim to play a part equal to or greater than that of any other union.

Why the Old Label?

LEWIS : Why does not NALGO change its name to something more appropriate to health staffs?

BEVAN : Many of our members think it should. But Conference last June decided not to change "NALGO" yet awhile. The word is familiar to Ministry and board officials, councillors, and the public in this country, and is known all over the world. It has thus acquired a goodwill value from which all its members benefit.

LEWIS : How can the present NALGO organisation possibly cater for health staffs? As a minority group in branch or district, they can be out-voted by other members with their own worries. The local government appeals machinery is of no value to them, but when their own appeals machinery is set up, what interest will non-hospital members have in it? Are present branches of value to hospital members any longer? The N.E.C. fears disintegration if the nationalised services are sectionalised, but I suggest that disintegration will only follow refusal to sectionalise. The electricity group, with 19,000 members out of a possible 23,000, could easily form a breakaway union. The health services, with only 14,000 or so out of a possible 250,000, could quickly disintegrate if the 14,000 considered that they were paying subscriptions to secure benefits for the other 236,000. Each section, I say, must be encouraged to develop along special lines to keep its members interested.

BEVAN : NALGO's organisation is being constantly revised and adapted to meet the changing conditions. Evidence of this is to be found in the appointment last year of a

special officer to organise health staffs. Further, consultative committees of health members are now being set up in each regional hospital board area. They will review conditions and appoint representatives both to the regional joint councils and to the national consultative committee which will, in turn, send representatives to the national joint councils. To facilitate efficient staffing of these committees, transferred members should consider re-grouping themselves into branches based on their employing authorities. We must not forget that health staffs have many problems in common with local government officers and for this reason the Association's 200,000 members will give them firm support. It is true that many NALGO trade unionists are providing benefits for unorganised workers and for that reason, amongst others, the trade unionists should help recruit those unorganised workers at once—into NALGO.

Speedier Appeals Machinery

LEWIS : Hospital members have not yet had their appeals heard under the national joint council for local authorities' services and are bitter about the long delay. Can they be assured that their own appeals machinery will function more satisfactorily?

BEVAN : Every effort will be made by the staff organisations to avoid delays in health staffs' appeals. Whilst it is dangerous to prophesy, I consider that we may reasonably hope to see in the health service a more expeditious application of scales than in the local government service, where there are more than 1,500 employing authorities.

LEWIS : At the Conference meeting of health staffs in June, the organising officer for health staffs said that the council for administrative and clerical staffs was "the most important from their [NALGO's] point of view." Is this true? And is such a statement likely to attract other staffs?

BEVAN : The organising officer for health staffs tells me that the phrase did not convey his intended meaning. It would have been more accurate to say that that council was the most "pressing" from NALGO's point of view. At that time, it was the only health functional council that had met; consideration of the problems of officers covered by it was therefore most urgent. The Association does not consider the claims of any one section "more important" than those of others. All are equally important, but some demand more urgent attention.

Value of the Volunteer

LEWIS : Hospital members want to see paid NALGO officials deal with service matters, or alternatively professional and amateur negotiators acting as a team. They do not want amateurs only.

BEVAN : As I have already said, NALGO has increased its staff, both at national and district levels. All health staffs may be assured that NALGO has an adequate professional staff and that it will be further increased as necessary to meet progressive demands. But the value of voluntary work must not be underestimated. No trade union can exist without the constant, energetic, and devoted assistance of large numbers of voluntary workers, and no paid officer can replace them.

LEWIS : Constructively, I suggest :
(a) the formation of national councils for (1) local authority, (2) electricity, (3) gas, and (4) health service staffs, to consider the special problems of each group and elect representatives to national joint councils;

(b) A national executive council to deal with matters of common interest to all sections and composed of representatives of each national council in proportion to membership;

(Continued at foot of next column)

NALGO Diplomacy Gains More Pay for Student Nurses

INCREASES of up to £30 a year and dependants' allowances have been approved for student nurses by the nurses' and midwives' functional council.

Pupil assistant nurses and pupil midwives will also benefit from the council's recent settlement, but student nurses and student nursery nurses will have to wait a little longer. Their claims will shortly be examined by special committees.

Perhaps more significant than the cash increases themselves, though these are welcome and long overdue, is the decision to pay the student nurse a training allowance in recognition of her status as a student rather than a wage in recognition of the work which she is to-day, and must be for some time to come, called upon to do if our hospitals are to be kept open.

The principle inherent in the decision has for long been the Association's policy. Early this year, when the majority report of the Working Party on the Recruitment and Training of Nurses was under consideration, NALGO supported the working party's contention that nurses in training must no longer be regarded as junior employees subject to an out-worn system of discipline and that they must be accorded full status so far as the intrinsic requirements of nurse training permitted. To this, NALGO added that, in its view, the term "student status" meant that the student was primarily a student; that all her abilities should be directed to training in her chosen profession; and that she should not be called upon to carry out repetitive jobs or domestic duties unless they were a necessary part of the training.

Although not all NALGO wanted, the new recommendations are a big step forward and will have profound effect on the negotiations about to take place for all grades of the profession.

At one stage the negotiations came near to deadlock, and but for the good work of the council's negotiating committee and the patience and tact displayed by HADEN CORSER, NALGO's deputy general secretary, as chairman of the staff side of that committee, might well have broken down altogether. NALGO can, therefore, be proud of the part it has played.

The opening clause of the agreement reads :

1. That nurses in training should be accorded "student status"; and
2. That they should be provided with the best possible training and professional education.

The terms of the agreement affecting allowances are as follows :

Student Nurses other than those taking mental training.

- i. That for all student nurses commencing to train on or after January 1st, 1949, the basis of remuneration should be an inclusive (gross) training allowance of £200 out of which the student should meet a charge of £100 for the services provided by the training hospital, viz., board and lodging, uniform and laundry.
- ii. That from the 1st September, 1948, to the 31st December, 1948, and thereafter, for all resident student nurses in training at the latter date, the basic cash allowance should be £100, and that the services provided by the hospital, i.e., board and lodging, uniform and laundry, should continue to be emoluments in kind, as hitherto, but valued for superannuation purposes at £100.

(Continued from preceding column)

(c) A district or regional organisation of similar type based on the area covered by the joint council for the particular section involved;

(d) Local executive councils to arrange sports, issue a journal, and deal with the Benevolent fund, appeals, scales, and conditions.

BEVAN : Some of the suggestions are already approved policy. But the reorganisation of a body such as NALGO is a complex matter and cannot be done without great care and thought. As Conference recognised, there is no stable basis in the services just yet for a complete constitutional change. On some questions there are alternative methods to be considered and it is the Association's desire to study these in the light of the experience now being reaped, and choose those which will knit the Association most closely together and keep it organised on democratic lines.

iii. That to the basic training allowance should be added, as from the 1st September, 1948, a responsibility allowance at the rate of £10 per annum from the commencement of the second year's training, a single cash payment of £5 upon passing the Preliminary State Examination, and an increase in the responsibility allowance from £10 to £25 from the commencement of the third year.

Pupil Assistant Nurses.

That the basis of remuneration should be as for general student nurses, i.e., £200 per annum (gross) training allowance with responsibility allowance of £10 per annum in the second year and a single cash payment of £5 at the end of training and on passing the test for enrolment. There would be the same differentiation as for student nurses between pupil assistant nurses in training on the 31st December, 1948, and those commencing training on or after January, 1949.

Training for the Certificate of the Tuberculosis Association.

That the training allowances for unqualified nurses training only for the certificate of the Tuberculosis Association should continue to be £5 higher than those for pupil assistant nurses but there would be no additional cash payment. In Scotland this higher rate would continue for trainees taking tuberculosis training only, but not for those combining tuberculosis and fever training. There should be the same differentiation as for student nurses between trainees in training on the 31st December, 1948, and those commencing training on or after 1st January, 1949.

All Non-Resident Student Nurses, Pupils and Trainees.

That for all non-resident students, the living-out allowances should be £100 per annum, with the addition of free meals on duty, uniform and laundry.

Dependants' Allowances.

That the basic training allowances recommended above should be augmented by dependants' allowances in accordance with the rules of the Government Vocational Training Scheme, viz., 10s. per week for an adult dependant, and 5s. for a dependent child or children.

Pupil Midwives.

That for pupil midwives (all of whom would be resident) the cash training allowance should be as follows :

| | From July, 1948 | From Sept., 1948 |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| (i) If S.R.N. or R.S.C.N. (or R.F.N. if in Scotland) | £100 | £130 (or £230) |
| (ii) If not State Registered— | | |
| 1st year | £75, £105 (or £205) | |
| 2nd year and until first exam. passed | £80, £110 (or £210) | |
| During second period of training | £95, £125 (or £225) | |

There would be the same differentiation as for student nurses, between pupil midwives in training on the 31st December, 1948, and those commencing training on or after 1st January, 1949.

Post-Registration Student Nurses (i.e., qualified nurses taking further nursing training).

That the training allowances for qualified nurses taking further training should be further discussed by the two sides, but that for the time being the existing scales should be amended so as to provide:

- (i) For a nurse whose initial qualification was one requiring a two-year course of training, the salary scale should be £120 × £10—£140.
- (ii) For a nurse whose initial qualification was one requiring a three-year course of training, the salary scale should be £130 × £10—£140.

London Loading for General Student Nurses.

That this loading as set out in the Rushcliffe recommendations should continue for the present.

Salary on Qualifying.

A student nurse, on qualification, will receive the salary of a staff nurse.

School Nurses' Increment.—The Rushcliffe nurses' salaries committee's recommendation that school nurses should receive a long-service increment of £10 beyond the scale applies to those over 40 who do not possess the health visitor's certificate but who have served as school nurse—not as health visitors as reported last month—for ten or more years.

WHITLEYISM IS OPENING THE DOOR TO A BETTER LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE

Sir Horace Wilson Stresses Benefits to Councils and Staff

REVEALING insights into the working of Whitleyism in local government were given by SIR HORACE WILSON, Independent Chairman of the National Joint Council for the local government service, in an address to the annual conference of the Association of Municipal Corporations at Torquay on September 22. Sir Horace was addressing employers and he therefore looked at the work of the National Council primarily from their point of view; but many of his comments are of equal interest and application to the local government officers whose representatives form the staff side of the Council.

That Council, Sir Horace reminded his audience, was not established in its present form until 1944—nearly thirty years after the Whitley Committee set up in 1916 had recommended joint consultation as the best means of fixing salaries, service conditions, and other matters of mutual interest between employers and employed—and he attributed its successful establishment, in the face of much discouragement, mainly to the “untiring efforts” of the joint secretaries—EDWARD BISHOP and HADEN CORSER—the latter now deputy general secretary of NALGO.

An Attractive Career

The outstanding achievement of the National Council was the promulgation of the scheme of conditions of service—the “Charter”—in 1946.

“That scheme,” Sir Horace declared, “is devised to enable employing authorities to deal with their staffs on a basis intended to mark the local government service as offering a career likely to attract entrants of the type required to meet the future needs of local government. The underlying object . . . is the improvement of the service, and, as the recommendations come into force, such improvement may confidently be expected. . . .

“Recruitment is a problem now and may remain one for some time to come. Local government is in competition with other organisations for staff and so far as can be seen it is not holding its own. Whatever may be the future readjustments in local government, the need to attract and retain competent staff will remain. The Whitley Councils help to give the impression of a profession, a career with prestige and prospects.”

“The scheme of conditions of service,” he continued, “recognises the fact that the concession of ‘rights’ to the staffs involves the acceptance of responsibilities. One of such responsibilities is the obligation to give the best possible service to the community. The Local Government Examinations Board has been set up mainly to translate this responsibility into practice. The promotion examination has been introduced, not as a device for preventing promotion, but as a means of ensuring that those eligible for promotion have knowledge of local government and allied subjects. If the promotion examination succeeds only in securing in the local government service the use of simple English which the man in the street can understand, the establishment of the Board will be fully justified.”

Intermediate Examinations • Claim

“The Examinations Board has also published a first list of final examinations recognised as alternatives to the promotion examination. Representations have been made that the intermediate stage of these examinations should be recognised. These representations are under consideration and no doubt a final conclusion will be reached after consideration of all the pros and cons.”

“Paramount in this matter is the need of a progressive system of education and training, and the Board and the National Joint Council will eventually work out a complete system, suited to the needs and future of the local government service. The Board is now engaged upon the task of arranging for the entrance examination contemplated in the scheme—an important factor in the building up of an improved service.”

“Going on to discuss the ‘delicate and difficult’

question of relations between the National Council on the one hand and the provincial councils and the individual local authority on the other hand, Sir Horace observed that: “Some authorities have looked askance at the copies of national agreements about salaries, holidays, sick leave, etc., transmitted to them for adoption, and it is not surprising that requests have been made for the provincial councils, and indeed in some instances the individual authorities, to be consulted by the National Council before agreements are arrived at.”

“Give and Take” Agreements

“This is a symptom of a healthy spirit of independence in local authorities with which one is bound to feel much sympathy. But the proceedings of the National Council are frequently in the nature of negotiations, in the course of which the two sides, advancing or retreating from their initial positions, by discussion and by ‘give and take’ arrive at an agreed solution of the problem to be settled. From time to time during the proceedings pronouncements have to be made by the leaders of the respective sides, the statements marking a definite stage-in the negotiations, and such pronouncements must necessarily fit in with the circumstances as they then exist. The practical difficulty of conducting negotiations of this nature if one side were to be composed of some 1,500 separate authorities will be obvious . . .

“In any event a National Council implies national responsibilities and assumes the exercise of judgment based on close and continuing attention to the matters calling for joint discussion, and, if possible, agreement with the other side. Naturally, national representatives should (and for their peace of mind would) take care to have knowledge of provincial if not strictly local views on major issues; but the national representatives are national leaders and must be allowed the discretion needed for the proper performance of the duties attaching to the positions for which they have been selected by the associations and the provincial councils respectively. Of course, like the leaders of democracy in other spheres, they have to be careful not to let their leadership run too far ahead of their constituents, but just how far ahead and in what direction can be determined only by themselves in the light of the knowledge they have of the relevant facts and circumstances of the time.”

Only Negotiators Can Decide

“In this connection,” he continued, “it should be remembered that the basis of Whitleyism is agreement by both sides and this assumes a degree of compromise which can only be accurately assessed by those who have taken part in the discussions, often protracted, and who are, therefore, in the best position to judge how much further, if at all, any particular view-point can be pressed, or whether the time has arrived when it is wise to adopt the then position as the basis of agreement . . .”

“Of the recent decision to raise the salary ‘ceiling’ of the Charter from £760 to £1,000, and to set up separate committees to deal with the salaries and conditions of clerks to local authorities (other than county clerks) and of chief officers and other officers with salaries over £1,000, Sir Horace observed:

“It may well be thought that it would have been preferable to make arrangements for these special categories of officers within the framework of the existing National Joint Council, if only to avoid adding to the number of separate bodies dealing with conditions in the local government service. The matter was considered at considerable length, however, throughout many months and it must be supposed, I expect, that the results of combined wisdom are good results.”

“No doubt,” he added, “steps will be taken to ensure a due measure of co-ordination. Some such means are needed, in any event, to deal adequately with the large number of questions that necessarily arise more or less continuously out of

the employment of some 175,000 staff (administrative and others) by more than 1,500 employing authorities. . . . This, no doubt, was one of the considerations in the minds of those responsible when it was decided by the County Councils Association, the Association of Municipal Corporations, the Urban District Councils Association, the Rural District Councils Association, the London County Council, and the employers’ sides of the National Joint Councils to establish the Local Authorities’ Conditions of Service Advisory Board, with offices in London and an appropriate staff.”

Of his belief in the value of Whitleyism, Sir Horace left his hearers in no doubt.

“It would be absurd,” he said, “to deny that a particular local authority could at any given moment settle what should be the terms and conditions of employment of its staff. But local government is not a thing of a given moment, whether in relation to this or to any other matter; it is a continuing and developing organisation and in respect of its staff, as with many other matters, a forward-looking and long-term policy is called for, and a wide and long view required of continuing responsibilities.”

Abolition Would Cause Chaos

“In any case experience has brought to light the disadvantages of a position in which each authority has to settle for itself what it will do as regards the terms and conditions of employment of its staff, and nobody who has had to grapple with the many detailed problems arising from the lack of central guidance would wish to go back to that state of affairs. The machinery of Whitley Councils provides a means of adjusting conditions from time to time in an orderly way and of giving guidance to the authorities, based upon informed consideration of the factors involved, and after discussion with the representatives of the staffs. It is a form of orderliness and an expression of dignity suitable to local government.”

“It is difficult to imagine what would happen if ‘Whitleyism’ in local government were to be suddenly abolished. . . . There could be only a series of undignified struggles, disorderly chaos, the negation of governance.”

Finally, after stressing the value of Whitleyism to ratepayers as well as to local authorities and their staffs—in enhancing the reputation of the service, its sense of duty, its efficiency, and its relative economy, in which both sides have a common interest; in preventing strikes and stoppages, which, in the public service might do great damage to innocent persons; and in adjusting salaries and conditions, upward or downward, in response to changed economic conditions in an orderly and reasonable way—Sir Horace sums up its benefits as follows:

To Local Authorities :

An assurance that recommendations will be loyally accepted by their employees.

A minimum of grievances and difficulties. The opportunity to put their point of view to their employees in a spirit of equality and goodwill. The prospect of maintaining loyal and contented employees working in co-operation and without friction for the good of the authorities and the community.

To the Employees :

A court of appeal to which they may take grievances and disputes.

Removal of questions of wages, etc., from the atmosphere of local prejudice and party politics.

The opportunity to put their point of view to their employers in a spirit of equality and goodwill.

The opportunity of a square deal.”

It is interesting—and flattering—to note that this enumeration is almost identical with that given in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE in December 1943, in an article in which we welcomed the decision to reconstitute the National Joint Council in its present form.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Assistance Board Officers May Retain Membership and Vote in Affiliation Ballot

MEMBERS transferred to the National Assistance Board before July 31 last and who were excluded from voting in the Association's ballot for affiliation to the Trades Union Congress will now have an opportunity to cast their votes.

This was decided at a meeting of NALGO's National Executive Council held in London on September 18. It followed the receipt of counsel's opinion.

It appears that the Association's rules, owing to their present wording, contain nothing to prevent a member retaining his membership after transferring to the service of the National Assistance Board. The same does not apply to those serving with the Ministry of National Insurance.

As a result, a special sub-committee is to notify all the officers concerned of their legal right to continue in membership and of their eligibility to vote in the ballot. The sub-committee will be composed of P. H. HARROLD, president, E. L. RILEY, N.E.C. chairman, G. LLEWELYN, vice-chairman, E. R. DAVIES, law and parliamentary chairman, and J. H. WARREN, general secretary. As "L.G.S." went to press, plans were being completed for a special issue of ballot cards for National Assistance Board members to register their votes on affiliation. Cards of the original issue may not be used: if they are, they will not count.

Resignations from the N.E.C., tendered by three of its members who had accepted appointments with the National Assistance Board in the belief that they were no longer eligible for membership, will not take effect. Each will be informed that he is eligible both to continue in membership, and, if he so desires, to serve on the N.E.C. The three are J. G. JESTER, West Midlands, F. N. NUNN, Southern, and F. W. GOODCHILD, Eastern.

Situation Under Review

Whilst approving these steps, the N.E.C. intends to review the situation created and to suggest to next year's Conference such amendments of rules as may be necessary. It has asked both the service conditions and law and parliamentary committees to examine the position.

Other decisions of the Council included:

Recruitment—The Council instructed its service conditions and organisation committee to examine the arrangements for the future recruitment of health and utility staffs; asked the general secretary to report to the next meeting of that committee on the expansion of the Association's organising staff; and empowered the committee to appoint as many extra assistant district officers as it deemed necessary to meet the Association's recruiting needs. As will be seen from the advertisement on this page, the Association is already seeking more assistant district officers and an organising officer for transport staffs.

Policy on Nurses—The formation was reported verbally, and approved, of a special sub-committee of eleven to consider the Association's policy on the pay, living conditions, and trade union organisation of all classes of nurses. Four N.E.C. members—L. BEVAN, J. W. MOSS, H. R. JONES, and W. PITTS-STEELE—will form the nucleus of the sub-committee, with power to co-opt seven others representative of all grades of the nursing profession, including student nurses.

Campaign for Higher Pay—The service conditions sub-committee has been instructed to report to the next meeting of the N.E.C. in December on the details of the campaign, called for by the Bournemouth Conference, for rates of pay equal to those paid by big banks and insurance companies. The sub-committee discussed the campaign at its meeting at Cardiff on September 11 and decided to seek the views of the public relations committee.

Conference Representation—In the course of a visit to Aberdeen—the venue of the Association's next Conference—the general secretary learned that, whilst accommodation was adequate in the Conference hall and for the reception, dance, and group and ancillary meetings, hotels and boarding houses in and around Aberdeen would be unable to accommodate more than a limited number of delegates. As a result, branches will be asked to

limit their representation to the same extent as this year.

Adaptation of Machinery—The N.E.C. has taken advantage of the mandate given it by the Bournemouth Conference to adapt the Association's Rules to give effect to the policy recommended in the Annual Report, and adopted by Conference, for alteration of the Association's

NALGO wants:**Assistant District Officers**

Applications are invited from men and women for the posts of assistant district officers on Grade V. of the Association's scale—£530 to £580—the commencing point depending on experience and qualifications. The appointment will be subject to one month's notice on either side; a superannuation scheme is in operation.

Each successful candidate will be required to organise local government officers and public utility and health service staffs in the area to which he, or she, may be assigned, to attend meetings, and to represent the Association before local authorities and other bodies. Organising experience, energy, enthusiasm, and ability in public speaking are essential, and a knowledge of local government, or of the public utility and health services, their functions and procedure, is desirable. Reasonable travelling and subsistence allowances will be paid.

Applications, giving full particulars of age, education, qualifications, NALGO and other experience, and names of three persons to whom reference may be made, must reach the General Secretary, NALGO, 1, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1, by October 30.

Canvassing members of the National Executive Council will disqualify.

Organising Officer for Transport Staffs

The date by which applications for the post of organising officer for transport staffs should be received has been postponed to October 16.

Applications should be addressed to the General Secretary, NALGO, 1, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1. Details of the appointment appeared on page 178 of the September "L.G.S."

machinery to meet the needs of health and public utility members.

Many utility and health staffs desire, for reasons reported on page 203, to form separate branches. But since only branches collecting subscriptions and sending completed membership returns to Headquarters by October 31 are eligible to participate in N.E.C. elections or a card vote at Conference, and since but few of the embryo branches now taking shape will be able to do that, the N.E.C. has ruled:

That where a new branch is formed as from

The Minister Defines "Mental Health Officer"

TRANSFERRED officers in the health services have only until October 4 to exercise the option open to them to remain within their existing superannuation scheme. This is of particular interest to those coming within the definition of "mental health officer"—a definition which was contained in a recent letter from the Minister of Health.

The letter refers to past negotiations between the Department and certain professional organisations and states that the Minister has informed hospital management committees of mental institutions of the principles to be observed in preparing, for superannuation purposes, lists of officers falling within the definition. The lists should be shown to the staff and sent, with full names and dates of birth, to the Ministry of Health, Services Superannuation Division, 28, Princes Gate, London, S.W.7.

The National Health Services (Superannuation) Regulations, 1947, define "mental health officer" as "an officer on the medical or nursing staff of a hospital used wholly or partly for treatment of mental patients or an institution so used for the treatment of defectives, who devotes the whole or substantially the whole of his time to the treatment or care of such patients or defectives, and such other classes or descriptions of officers employed in such hospitals or institutions as aforementioned as the Minister may designate."

November 1, the rights of those who were members of other branches at October 31 transferring to the new branch shall be preserved in regard to voting in an election of N.E.C. members and taking part in a card vote in respect of such members;

That the general secretary inform new branches of the rights of their members in membership before November 1; and

That branches existing at October 31 be asked to inform Headquarters, not later than December 31, of the names of new branches to which members may have transferred, and the numbers involved.

New Member—Mr. W. ROWLANDS has been elected to the N.E.C. to fill a vacancy in the representation of the North-Western district committee caused by the resignation as a district representative of E. L. RILEY, chairman of the council, who is entitled to an ex-officio seat on the council by virtue of his office as the Association's junior vice-president.

Mr. Rowlands, who is chief financial officer, Rhyl U.D., has been on the council before. In fact he sat on it from June 1943 until displaced at the elections last April. He has filled most branch offices, has figured prominently on the North-Western and North Wales district committees, and has sat on the N.J.C. for local authorities' staffs.

Gas N.J.C. Appointments Approved

THE appointment has been confirmed by the N.E.C. of the following four representatives of gas members of the Association to represent them, together with the three representatives already appointed, on the N.J.C. for gas staffs:

P. ASHEN, Birmingham city council; T. FERNLEY, Manchester city council; R. W. ILEY, Sunderland gas company; and C. I. POYNER, Gloucester gaslight company.

Of the four new appointments two were chosen from municipal and two from company undertakings.

The Association holds seven seats on the council, the remaining three being filled by J. E. N. DAVIS, NALGO's chief organisation officer, A. H. GEARY, Metropolitan district officer, and V. J. LUCK, organising officer for gas staffs.

The statement on page 181 of the September "L.G.S." that the Eastern regional joint council for gas staffs had defined AI undertakings as those whose annual gas make was "25 million cubic feet or more" was incorrect. It should have read "125 million cubic feet or more."

The Minister has designated as mental health officers "all officers employed in such hospitals or institutions who devote the whole or substantially the whole of their time to the treatment or care of mental patients or defectives."

In view of the varying conditions in different institutions affecting the titles of officers and the duties assigned to them, the Minister must rely upon hospital management committees to draw up accurate lists. But to secure uniformity and full observance of the intention of the designation, the Minister desires that the management committees, whilst taking into account any special circumstances, should have regard to the following considerations:

(a) Medical and nursing staffs are automatically included.

(b) The governing criterion is responsibility for the care or treatment of patients. Mere contact without responsibility does not qualify.

(c) Responsibility—for example, for the administration of departments or for apparatus or machinery—without actual responsibility for the care of patients, should not in itself be regarded as bringing an officer within the designated class.

(d) Seniority is not necessarily relevant. Senior officers may be ineligible for designation by reason of their remoteness from patients, whilst junior officers responsible for the care of patients will be eligible.

Electricity Members Begin Regrouping in South East

THE re-grouping of electricity members of the Association has begun in the South East.

The district consultative committee proposes that all members in the South Eastern electricity board area be asked to regroup themselves as from November 1—the beginning of the Association's financial year—in a planned system of 14 branches and to arrange meetings with their colleagues and elect honorary officers.

This proposal, though not yet finally ratified by the Service Conditions Committee of the N.E.C., has the approval of its sub-committee which met at Cardiff on September 11 and decided also that similar action in other areas was desirable. Such a proposal will in no way impair present members' voting rights in the next N.E.C. elections or at the next Conference, for the N.E.C. has since passed certain amendments to the Association's rules which will safeguard those rights. The amendments are reported on page 202.

In conveying the decisions of the consultative committee to electricity members concerned, the South Eastern district officer states:

"Formation of a new electricity branch will in many cases involve the departure of electricity members from their present branches and there may well be natural reluctance to break old ties and disturb happy relations and local contacts which have extended over many years. Nevertheless, the separate negotiating machinery for the industry at three levels—national, district, and joint staff committee—provides powerful, perhaps irresistible, arguments for separate electricity branches, and it is clear that these should be designed to coincide with the boundaries of the South Eastern board and its sub-areas."

Ties With Parent Branch

"There is no reason why present social and sports facilities should not remain available to the new electricity branch, and joint consultative committees of neighbouring branches, which are already in existence in many parts of the district, will provide another means of maintaining contact with the parent branch."

"The need for reorganisation is perhaps even stronger for electricity members within the area of the South Eastern board, but at present outside the sphere of the S.E. district of NALGO."

Branches wishing to transfer to another district must first obtain the approval of the district committees concerned.

In a report before the sub-committee it was made clear that the need for regrouping is by no means confined to the South East nor to electricity members. Other districts and other sections of the Association's membership have similar problems, and difficulties are being experienced as a result of the fact that the areas of the various boards for the new nationalised services are not co-terminous with those of the Association's districts.

"There is greater difficulty," the report continued, "where former municipal members elect to remain in the local authority branch." At Cheltenham, for example, the branch is in the South Western district, but the electricity staff is in the employ of the Midlands electricity board. One of the most powerful arguments against any system of rigid geographical boundaries is provided by the South Metropolitan regional hospital board which has its headquarters in London and extends over the Association's Metropolitan, South Eastern, Southern, and South Western districts.

The Future District "Area"

The loosening of district boundaries was the subject of an earlier report by the general secretary, who said that he had discussed immediate steps with the district staff and had agreed that each district officer should be furnished with a list of district committees, consultative committees, provincial joint councils, and branches for which he would be responsible. In other words the district "area" of the future will be a functional rather than a geographical one.

Equal Pay Campaign—The sub-committee agreed, subject to the approval of the service conditions committee and the N.E.C., to a proposal that the Joint Committee of Professional Organisations on Equal Pay and the Equal Pay Campaign Committee be invited to send another

deputation to Sir Stafford Cripps, Chancellor of the Exchequer, on equal pay. This would be in furtherance of the Conference instruction to the N.E.C. "to carry out, along with other interested bodies, an immediate campaign, at national and local levels, to bring about equality."

The joint committee consists of representatives of NALGO, the British Medical Association, the staff side of the Civil Service National Whitley Council, the National Union of Teachers, the Medical Women's Federation, and the National Federation of Professional Workers. At its last meeting, it had before it a resolution that NALGO would accept a scheme for "securing equal pay by giving women the same increments to their existing salaries as men until they reached the maxima of the comparable grades for men . . . provided equality is reached within five years." Proposals on these lines were put to the Chancellor on February 24 by a deputation from the staff side of the Civil Service National Whitley Council. But the Chancellor replied that, for reasons given in the White Paper on personal incomes, the Government could not begin to apply the principle in present circumstances, though he was prepared to reconsider the possibility of doing so when improvements in the economic situation allowed.

Later, on July 29, Mr. RALPH MORLEY, M.P., asked in the House of Commons when the Chancellor proposed to agree to equal pay for civil servants, suggesting "now that the danger of inflation appears to be completely passed, and we are entering a deflationary period, would not this be an opportune time to render this elementary piece of justice to women civil servants?" But Mr. GLENVILLE HALL, financial secretary to the Treasury, replied that he thought Mr. Morley's belief in the existence of deflationary trends was not general.

Matters reported to the sub-committee included:

Cheif Officers—The Association of Municipal Corporations had rejected representations from the Local Government Legal Society that deputy town clerks should be included in the scope of the joint negotiating committee for town clerks, giving as its reasons the negotiations which had taken place with other associations of local authorities and the fact that the National Joint Council for local authorities' staffs was not prepared to agree to the exclusion from its purview of all deputy clerks.

The A.M.C. had also rejected a similar request from the Law Society that the salaries of assistant solicitors be dealt with separately by the joint negotiating committee for chief officers and that the society be given direct representation on that committee, giving as its reasons the course of negotiations with the National Joint Council and the fact that some assistant solicitors are already subject to the jurisdiction of that Council.

We Inquire Into Blind Officers' Conditions

THROUGH its district staff, the Association is seeking information about the employment of blind persons by county and county borough councils.

This action is being taken at the request of the Ministry of Labour's working party charged with the task of investigating facilities existing for the employment of blind persons in industry and in the public and other services, and making recommendations for their development. NALGO is asked to report:

The numbers of blind shorthand-typists and telephonists employed in local government offices;

The possibility of increasing these numbers if adequately trained blind persons are available; Any difficulties that have to be overcome when blind persons are employed in local government work;

Particulars of any administrative posts that have been or might be filled by blind people;

The position of blind employees in respect of establishment, pensions, and similar matters; The numbers of local government employees who, during the last ten years or so, have been retired or have resigned because of seriously failing sight;

Any ways in which NALGO could co-operate with the Ministry in increasing opportunities for blind workers in local government; and

Further Arbitration Successes—Recent cases in which the Association took successful action under the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Orders included:

Horsham R.D.—The council agreed to adopt the Charter in its entirety after a dispute had been referred to, but before it had been heard by, the National Arbitration Tribunal.

Wiltshire C.C.—Before a dispute was heard by the provincial council, the county council agreed that the conditions of service of education officers transferred to the service of the county council from that of Swindon B.C. should be not less favourable under the former than under the latter—a principle to which it had previously objected.

Bristol B.C.—The National Arbitration Tribunal found in favour of the Association's claim for increasing the salaries of three officers of the city engineer's department.

Oldbury B.C.—The appeals committee of the N.J.C. for local authorities' staffs recommended that the council should give effect to a decision of the West Midlands provincial council on the grading of the assistant gas engineer and manager. This the council had previously refused to do.

Swindon B.C.—The council accepted the decision of the appeals committee of the N.J.C. that a clerk in the treasurer's department be regraded.

Cwmbran U.D.—The N.J.C. appeals committee recommended the council to give effect to decisions of the provincial council appeals committee, which it had previously refused to do.

More Power for the L.G. Whitley Councils

IN future the English N.J.C. and the Scottish J.I.C. for local authorities' staffs may have disputes referred to them under Article 2 (2) of the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Orders, 1940-44.

The effect of this development is that their ruling on such disputes will be binding on both parties. Hitherto, their power has been limited under Article 2 (3) of the Orders, only to taking action "with regard to the promotion of a settlement."

Article 2 (2), reads ". . . if in the Minister's opinion suitable means for settling the dispute already exist by virtue of the provisions of any agreement to which the parties are organisations representative of employers and workers respectively, he shall refer the matter for settlement in accordance with those provisions . . ."

The Minister of Labour, in response to an appeal from the Association, has reviewed action taken hitherto in the light of information supplied by the Association regarding the representative capacity of the employers' sides of the two councils. His decision is that, in all the circumstances, the two councils "provide suitable means such as are contemplated in Article 2 (2) of the Order . . ."

Maltby U.D. Relents

AFTER the review of its staffs' salaries in which it gave effect to the consolidation award of the National Arbitration Tribunal, Maltby U.D.C. put two collectors under six months' notice of dismissal on the ground that the financial resources of the district were inadequate to bear the cost of salaries "at such a ceiling." It also decided to give consideration later to filling the resulting vacancies by younger persons.

The matter was reported to the Yorkshire provincial council and referred to the appeals committee. That committee was attended by representatives of the urban district and of the Association. The former agreed to place before their council the views of the employers' side of the appeals committee and this was followed shortly afterwards by the rescission of the resolution terminating the collectors' employment.

We Have Majority On Each Electricity Council

THE number of seats allotted to each of the four trade unions represented on the 15 electricity joint councils has now been settled. There are ten staff seats on each council, allocated as follows:

| Area | NALGO | C.A. | N.U.G. | T.G. |
|------------------|-------|------|--------|------|
| | W.U. | M.W. | W.U. | |
| London | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| S. East | 6 | 3 | 1 | - |
| Southern | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| S. West | 6 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Eastern | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| East Midlands | 6 | 1 | 2 | - |
| Midlands | 9 | - | 1 | - |
| S. Wales | 9 | 1 | - | - |
| Mersey, N. Wales | 9 | - | - | 1 |
| Yorkshire | 9 | 1 | - | - |
| N. East | 6 | 3 | 1 | - |
| N. West | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| S.E. Scotland | 9 | - | 1 | - |
| S.W. Scotland | 6 | 3 | 1 | - |
| N. Scotland | 8 | 1 | 1 | - |
| Total . . . | 109 | 20 | 13 | 8 |

So far, fourteen councils have met and elected honorary officers. In each, the secretarial work has gone to the NALGO district officer and the vice chairmanship—and leadership of the staff side—to a member of the Association.

Interim Scale Application

The interim general clerical scale of salaries for electricity staffs, approved by the Electricity National Joint Council and published in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE last month, covers the same range as the General Division scale in the local government Charter—£135 at 16 to £385 at 32 for men—but with different increments, with the result that at some points the scale is above the Charter scale and at others it is below. The National Joint Council has ruled that an officer at present subject to the local government Charter or other recognised scale shall remain on that scale until the salary for his age on the interim scale "is equal to or exceeds" the salary for his age on his present scale. When that happens he will transfer to the interim scale.

The effect of this ruling is that officers on the local government scale will transfer to the interim scale at ages 21 or 26, at which points the salaries of the two scales are equal. Since the increments on the interim scale are £17 at 22 and £13 at 27, compared with increments of £25 and £15 at the same ages on the local government scale, such officers will be worse off than if they had remained on the local government scale.

The staff side sought the deletion of the words "is equal to or," but without success, and the question has now been referred to the N.J.C. negotiating committee for further consideration.

Qualifications of Hospital Finance Officers

THE Minister of Health has now defined the qualifications that he considers should be possessed by candidates for the post of finance officer to a hospital management committee.

In a communication to management committees he states:

A finance officer should normally possess professional qualifications and have had experience in the handling of accounts. Under the financial regulations he is responsible to the committee for the preparation of estimates, the control of cash transactions, maintenance of the ledger accounts, including store accounts, and the preparation of the annual financial statements required by the Minister.

He will also be responsible for maintaining proper accounts relating to the endowment funds of management committees and the preparation of the annual statements required by the Minister. In view of the importance of these duties the Minister considers that an experienced officer with professional qualifications should be appointed to the post wherever possible.

In management committees where the appointment of a separate finance officer is not justified and the post is combined with that of secretary or supplies officer, the Minister suggests that it may not be practicable to secure an administrative officer with the above qualifications, but he states that no officer without accounting experience should be appointed.

Association Wins Fair Play for Members in 13 Recent Legal Cases

FURTHER examples of the way in which NALGO's legal department helps members are provided in the following reports of recent cases.

Accidents

Knocked Down by Lorry—£500.—A sanitary inspector was knocked down by a lorry on a pedestrian crossing and sustained a broken left arm and head injuries. He later complained of constant headaches and impaired memory, and a specialist advised that these symptoms were a direct result of the accident and would persist for a long time, possibly permanently. Negotiations with the insurance company failing, a writ was issued against the owners of the lorry, who admitted negligence and paid £350 into court. This amount was considered inadequate, and at trial the Lord Chief Justice awarded the inspector £500, including £140 special damages.

Injured Hand—£175.—A shorthand-typist injured her hand when her bicycle collided with the rear of a motor-car. Negotiations with the insurance company failed to produce a satisfactory offer and a writ was issued, but before the action reached trial the insurance company increased its offer to £175. The member accepted this, plus costs of the action.

Knocked Off Bicycle—£100.—A technical assistant was knocked off his bicycle by a motorist and sustained a broken right arm and shock, resulting in permanent stiffness of the shoulder. His claim was taken up with the motorist's insurance company, and although there was a risk that a court would have found contributory negligence on the part of the member, the insurance company agreed to pay £100, including £13 special damages.

Hit by Army Vehicle—£96.—A cleansing officer was knocked down by an Army vehicle when alighting from a tramcar, and injured. A claim was made against the War Office, which agreed to pay £50, plus special damages of £46.

Struck by Door—£75.—An electricity officer was knocked off her bicycle and injured when a lorry driver opened the door of his cab while she was passing. A claim on her behalf was settled by payment of £75 damages.

Hurt on Bus—£30.—A member was thrown to the ground, bruised and shocked, when a bus began to move off while he was boarding it. The bus company refused to admit liability, and proceedings were taken in the county court, which awarded the member £30 damages.

Hit by Falling Plaster—£55.—A junior architectural assistant was struck on the head by a piece of plaster when passing a public-house, the roof of which was being repaired. There was no notice warning pedestrians of the work. The owners and tenants of the public-house, and the contractors and sub-contractors engaged on the work at first refused to admit liability, but after proceedings had been begun in the county court, they made an offer of £55. This was accepted by the member, plus the costs of the proceedings.

Damaged Bicycle Replaced.—A member left his bicycle against a lamp standard outside his office, and it was run over by a car, and damaged beyond repair. The driver refused to admit liability, and county court proceedings were begun, but before the action reached trial the driver's insurance company settled in full.

Slander

An electricity officer complained of an allegation of drunkenness that had been made against him. Counsel having advised that the allegation was defamatory and actionable, a letter was sent to the person who made the allegation demanding a withdrawal, an apology, and an undertaking not to repeat the allegation or any similar allegation regarding the member. A signed withdrawal, apology, and undertaking were obtained.

A housing manager was accused of having received £20 for a key of a new council house. Counsel having advised that the allegation was defamatory and actionable, a letter was therefore written to the person who made the allegation, calling upon him to apologise and to publish his apology in the local Press. He agreed, and an approved apology was published.

Workmen's Compensation

A sister and a probationer nurse employed at the same hospital contracted tuberculosis. Claims were made on their behalf under the Workmen's Compensation Acts to the effect that contracting the disease amounted to an accident arising out of and in course of their employment since both had come into contact with tuberculosis in the course of their duties. After prolonged negotiations, the claims were settled at £75 and £150 respectively.

Pension Appeal

On a member's release from the Forces in September, 1945, he was found to be suffering from chronic bronchitis and emphysema. He applied for a pension, was refused, and failed in his appeal to the pensions appeal tribunal that the disability was aggravated by war service.

On Counsel's advice, an application was made to the tribunal for leave to appeal to the High Court. Although such leave was refused, the Association renewed its plea before the High Court judge, who gave leave to appeal and subsequently found that the bronchitis and emphysema had been aggravated by war service, and allowed the appeal—with the result that the member was granted a pension.

Return of Contributions

During the war, two members had their war service pay made up under a resolution of their council which provided that, in assessing war service pay, a sum was to be added representing the value of subsistence and clothing in the Forces.

As a result of this provision, the council made no contributions during the later periods of the members' war service, although the amount of their Forces pay was, at that time, less than the remuneration which they would have received had they continued to serve in their civil capacities; nevertheless, superannuation contributions were claimed by the council and paid by the members.

On demobilisation, they claimed repayment of those amounts on the ground that they were liable to contribute superannuation only when their pay was being made up or was not less than the remuneration which they would have received had they continued to serve in their civil capacities. The council, however, refused to admit the claims, and although the members successfully appealed to the Ministry of Health, persisted in its refusal. On Counsel's advice, a writ was then issued against the authority, which thereupon settled the claims in full.

STUDENTS' CORNER

A Warning to "Crammers"

In this new feature, KENNETH S. CARTER, NALGO's Education Officer, will discuss each month some problem of interest to students.

AMONG those seeking better jobs, I often hear it said that "qualifications" count—that to have "letters after one's name" is to win access to all the plums of local government. But, though qualifications may get you on a shortlist, selection committees do not look to them alone; and, if you get the job, you have got to hold it down. There is nothing more tragic than the plight of the "blue-eyed boy," who gains a responsible post and finds he cannot cope with his responsibilities.

Qualification, therefore, is not a ticket automatically entitling you to a first-class journey to the top: rather is it a "label" indicating the contents of your mind—and it is you alone who can prove whether the label means "I have passed the examination" or merely "I have passed the examination."

This is the difference between study and "cramming." "Cramming" may help you to pass the examination, but study alone will help you to do the job.

The NALGO Correspondence Institute never "crams" its students. It gives the student practical help, tries to solve his personal difficulties, and encourages him to find his own answers—which are not always in the text-book or the study notes. This is sound training—for the man who gets a senior post will not find the answers to all his problems in the text-books.

READERS' FORUM

T.U.C. Ballot : Pensioners' Plight : Promotion Examination

AS I write, the question of T.U.C. affiliation is being settled in accordance with a Conference decision. May I, before the result is made known, make the forecast that neither side will record a vote exceeding 50 per cent of total membership? In my view—as a conservative estimate—about 15 per cent of members are either disinterested or unable to make up their minds, and will therefore abstain from voting. Hence, to secure a 50 per cent vote for affiliation, less than 35 per cent of total membership must be opposed to it. This is unlikely—and it is also unlikely that less than 35 per cent of membership will vote for affiliation.

If we assume that 45 per cent vote against affiliation and 40 per cent for it, the N.E.C. will not apply for affiliation. If, on the other hand, 45 per cent vote for affiliation and 40 per cent against, the N.E.C., on instructions, will still not apply for affiliation, although the active opposition to the decision to remain outside the T.U.C. will be 45 per cent, and the potential opposition of the abstainers (who, in a democratic ballot, accept the wish of the majority) may raise the proportion to 60 per cent of members.

For this reason, I consider that Conference has approved a ballot which ignores basic democratic principles and places the Association in danger of a split should the ballot show a majority voting in favour of affiliation which does not amount to 50 per cent of membership.

Conference should have examined the decision more closely and arranged a ballot which would have taken into account the abstentions and laid more emphasis on the size of the *minority* vote rather than on the *majority* vote. I realise that a substantial backing is necessary before such a controversial move as affiliation to the T.U.C. is made, but if we are satisfied that it is reasonable for the Association to remain outside the T.U.C. if the opposition is 40 per cent, surely also, it is reasonable to expect that there should be a 40 per cent vote to prevent affiliation. Should total votes cast not exceed 75 per cent of membership, I would say a 35 per cent opposition should be sufficient to prevent affiliation.

I hope, therefore, that I shall be in a position to put the following to Conference next year, if, as I predict, the present ballot does not provide a 50 per cent vote:

To apply for affiliation to the T.U.C. is, as a result of a ballot of all working members, the following conditions are satisfied:

- (a) a majority vote is recorded in favour;
- (b) less than 40 per cent of total membership vote against;
- (c) where less than 75 per cent of membership vote, less than 35 per cent membership vote against.

Newbury Borough.

K. E. BELLINGER.

A Ballot Soliloquy

TO T.U.C. or not to T.U.C.; that is the question;

Whether 'tis better to amalgamate

Or stay just as we are, and by a ballot

Find this vexed problem once for all.

Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished.

To vote or not to vote; and having voted

Know that we have voted the right way.

Aye, there's the rub. For how can laymen know

When experts fail t'agree? In enterprise

Of pitch and moment who may tell the way

To go? Who can sift the golden grain

From chaff; the truth from specious argument;

The facts from hazy theories? Who would swap

The status quo for some fond nebulous dream?

What phase may come when we have shuffled off

Our present state must give us pause. Ah, me!

And thus the native hue of resolution

Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.

It must be done! A cross one way or t'other.

There, 'tis done! Now let this game be o'er.

J. A. H.

PENSIONS AUGMENTATION

"A Cheese-paring Scale."

RLADING in my newspaper recently of the appalling conditions under which men who spent their lives in salaried positions in the railway service are now living on pensions based on pre-war scales. I was struck by the similarity of their case to that of many retired municipal officers.

Had I no other income, I could barely exist and support my wife on my pension, yet, because of extremely self-denying thrift over practically my whole working life, plus a relative's legacy, our joint income precludes any pension increase. Illogically enough, the council did not reduce my salary because I had a private income. Had I been at work after the war, I should have got a cost-of-living bonus.

My council was at first excepted from participation in national insurance, but subsequently decided to come under the Act. Older members of the staff, of whom I was one, did not

Letters for the November Journal must reach the Editor, 1, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1, by October 13.

become voluntary contributors because, not having been continuously insured, we considered the then reduced pension of 4s. 6d. to 5s. a week not worth paying for. The council then started its own pension scheme, under which we all contributed 5 per cent of our salaries. Of course, had the older men foreseen the present national pension they would have joined the national scheme. The Government of that day had small-minded ideas and was mean enough to confiscate the contributions of those who refused the option of becoming voluntary contributors. My wife, who, before marriage in 1923, was a typist, had paid contributions regularly, but was told that on marriage she would lose all pension rights.

Now, the nominal value of the pound has deteriorated, and will never recover its pre-war basis. The process is not new, but is not appreciated because of the widespread delusion that it is possible to have a standard of value. About 100 years ago skilled artisans in Portsmouth Dockyard were paid 1s. 7d. a day, St. Marylebone constables earned 12s. a week, and milk was 1d. a quart. Yet the little 123½ grain gold disc was, even then, called a pound. Assuming it to be "worth" 40s. to-day, it will buy only 53 quarts of milk instead of 160 a century ago.

It is about time the NALGO parliamentary representatives impressed the Minister of Pensions with the enormity of the present cheese-paring scale of municipal pensions augmentation. It may be contended that, even now, a sliding-scale would be equitable, because it is probable that top-grade officials were able to save out of their big salaries, and thus provide additional income for old age, but nobody with a sense of justice would assert that a man with a pension of, say, under £3 a week or so should get no increase because of alleged affluence due to early thrift. Our legislators had no compunction about voting themselves an additional £400 a year directly they acquired power. Yet the Government view seems to be that the sooner the poor old pensioner parasites peg out the better.

Ravenscroft, Colyford, J. P. HODGE.

Devon.

PROMOTION EXAMINATION**Why English?**

In his article in last month's journal on the results of the first promotion examination, "Critic" asks: "Why did the Examinations Board feel it necessary to include English as a specific subject for the examination?" This is a superfluous question to which "Critic" had already provided an answer in the statement that only 41 out of 702 candidates secured 80 per cent marks or more in English, 19 candidates obtained less than 20 per cent, and some scripts were classified "illiterate." The fact that all the papers had to be written in English does not make the English paper unnecessary, since there are many ways of "dodging the column," especially if replies have been learned in correspondence course and text-book fashion. "Critic" quotes the Examination Board's statement, that, "it is important for the official to be able to write clear English." The difficulty is finding those who can. My experience is that this *rara avis* migrated long ago.

The teaching in schools of English grammar seems to be placeless, and "Critic's" naive suggestion that only a handful of candidates write well enough to be in a position to qualify for employment outside the service rates local government officers no higher than is common with our detractors, though I can go a long way with him.

Bournmouth.

"OLD STAGER." "Critic" did not suggest that "only a handful of candidates write well enough to be in a position to qualify for employment outside the service." He said "a handful of the candidates write so well that they will probably not remain in local government," implying that their talent would lead them into authorship, journalism, and similar fields, which is a different matter.

Study "Stimulating"

"CRITIC'S" outlook on the inclusion of English into the promotion examination seems rather narrow. Why take one or two quotations out of their context and then ridicule them? The questions were designed to reveal candidates' ability to distinguish wheat from chaff, and to understand the English language however it might be used. (Some official documents make equally "good" reading!) In any case, the criticised questions were optional.

In the "essay" question the examiners were generous. They offered the choice of three distinct types of essay, covering nine subjects, which, though commonplace, gave scope for originality.

Does "Critic" think that an expert in a particular subject is necessarily a good judge of style?

The inclusion of English as a compulsory subject necessitated study. Priding myself on having a proper regard for English, I had thought I would not trouble to attend a class, but having attended one I continued, and found it most stimulating. I am certain the value of this study was felt in dealing with the remaining papers.

WINIFRED B. WILLMER.

25, The Grove, Bedford.

We had intended, when the article was written, to support it by publishing many more questions, but space would not permit. "Critic" cited a few as examples to illustrate his argument.

Hope for Age and Youth

IN his comments on the result of the first promotion examination, "Critic" publishes a table showing the distribution of marks in age groups and states: "It will be noted that at the younger and older ends, failures predominate." This conclusion may be depressing for members in these age groups, and I would point out that it is not a correct generalisation.

A statistical analysis of the table by the Chi squared test—which shows whether the results of a small analysis are attributable to chance or some other factor—indicates that, while there are significant differences between percentage rates of success over all, it is necessary to pick out those rates which differ significantly from the general pass percentage before making a generalised conclusion. One group, the 25-29 group, contributes a significant high rate: the remainder do not vary significantly from the general mean rate. The analysis is as follows:

| Age | Entrants | Pass | % Pass | Expec- ted No. | Devi- ation | Chi ² Test |
|-------|----------|------|--------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| -19 | 13 | 2 | 15 | 6.67 | -4.67 | 3.27 |
| 20-24 | 183 | 85 | 46 | 93.85 | -8.85 | .83 |
| 25-29 | 286 | 178 | 62 | 146.67 | +31.33 | 6.69 |
| 30-34 | 118 | 60 | 51 | 60.51 | -5.51 | .00 |
| 35-39 | 58 | 25 | 43 | 29.74 | -4.74 | .75 |
| 40-44 | 28 | 8 | 29 | 14.36 | -6.36 | 2.81 |
| 45-49 | 10 | 2 | 20 | 5.13 | -3.13 | 1.19 |
| 50+ | 6 | — | — | 3.08 | -3.07 | 3.06 |

Total .. 702 360 .. 360 .. 19.32
General pass percentage .. 51.28.
p = .528 Chi² = 19.32.

As far as these results go, there is no reason for an entrant of any age group to despair of success 4, Molton Road,
Liverpool, 16. (NALG O Correspondence Institute Tutor).

Since, of 13 candidates under 19 and 16 candidates over 45, only two in each group passed the examination, "Critic's" comment that "at the younger and older ends failures predominate" is surely both

accurate and fair. It did not imply that the same proportions would inevitably prevail in future examinations. There is, of course, no reason for any candidate, of whatever age, to despair of success, provided his standard of education and study is reasonable.

"Examination Means Nothing"

TO my mind, all the discussion on the promotion examination is futile. The Charter states that promotion to a higher grade depends on there being a vacancy, except when the establishment is reviewed. The matter, therefore, rests solely with the employing authority, which determines whether or not a higher grade vacancy exists. Moreover, a General Division officer is not debarred from applying for an appointment in a higher grade.

The Charter is, in fact, in great need of overhaul, since passing a promotion examination means exactly nothing. A general division appointment cannot suddenly alter because the officer holding it has passed an examination.

I am senior clerk in the public health department, Harwich, and graded in the general division. My appeal for upgrading was unsuccessful in spite of a rehearing and evidence from the M.O.H. that the position merited a higher grading. As it is the opinion of the appeals committee that my appointment should be graded in the General Division, I cannot expect to benefit from passing the promotion exam. The only solution is to apply for a higher grade appointment elsewhere without sitting for the promotion examination.

"Wave Crest," S. J. ROSE.

Dovercourt, Essex.

Our correspondent appears to have overlooked paragraph 28 of the Charter, which provides that a General Division officer shall not be eligible for promotion to a higher grade unless he has passed the promotion examination or a recognised equivalent. Though the appeals committee has graded his present position in the General Division, passing the promotion examination will qualify him to apply for the next vacancy in a higher grade—for which he would be ineligible without it or its equivalent.

More Hints for Study

LAST month, "Socrates II" showed ambitious local government officers how to secure general qualifications. He stopped, however, at the D.P.A., whereas the promotion examination, the D.P.A., and the B.Sc. (Econ.) (London) can all be obtained in four years—and, in fact, some officers are taking this four-year path to two sound qualifications.

Subjects for the promotion examination and first-year D.P.A. can be almost identical, save that the former includes English. Second-year D.P.A. subjects can be taken with an eye on the B.Sc. The D.P.A. secures exemption from intermediate B.Sc. in all subjects except one, whilst final B.Sc. can be in subjects already studied for the D.P.A. J. J. C.

Institute's Revised Syllabus

"SOCRATES II" considers the qualification of the Corporation of Certified Secretaries more appropriate to local government than that of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries. Intending students may like to know that the latter body has now revised its syllabus to include secretarial practice and accountancy papers specially set for local government students. The change is to date from the December, 1949, examinations.

Flat 2, Winterwell Bldgs., R. E. FELL.
Belmont Bridge, Skipton.

EXAMINATION GRANTS

Hardships If Discontinued

I NOTE that the Local Government Examinations Board has recommended that the payment of monetary grants in recognition of examination successes be discontinued and that, instead, local authorities be recommended to give more assistance in post-entry training. At the meeting of the National Joint Council on July 27, the staff side opposed the abandonment of the payment of examination grants until it had been replaced by a scheme which would fully take its place, and many of us, who have nearly completed our studies, view with alarm the introduction of any new scheme which may prejudice our interests.

My own case must be typical. I have already spent nearly £20 on my examinations and the sum will eventually exceed £30. This money has been taken out of my small savings, and I look to the grant to assist in compensating me.

May I suggest that any new scheme supported by the staff side should contain a clause which will either post-date its inauguration, thereby giving sufficient time for those whose studies are nearly completed to avail themselves of the existing grant, or will enable officers who have begun their studies to elect to be treated under the existing grant scheme. Unless this is done, many of us will be pounds out of pocket and left with only the knowledge that we had a very raw deal. E.H.

The staff side had this and similar points in mind when referring back the recommendations for further consideration, and this particular aspect will be closely watched.

THE WORKING WEEK

"Not Long Enough"

MOST of us, I feel sure, are heartily sick of the whinings of the disgruntled whose effusions are given space in the cramped confines of "L.G.S." ("Clockwatcher," in his letter in September, is at least frank on his adoption of a suitable nom-de-plume, and his ingenious plea for reduced hours does not lack the originality of clockwatchers generally).

My opinion is that, by comparison with workers in industry and agriculture, we do not work long enough, and when it is considered that many of these workers get one week's holiday with pay, demands for reduced hours for local government officers seem all the more iniquitous, whether they are for reduced weekly hours or increased holidays—particularly when the generous scale of sick pay is remembered, and the extra allowance to those who are members of the auxiliary services.

In our present national state of poverty, it is time we thought more in terms of service to the community and forgot self-pity and schemes for work-dodging. If NALGO is to maintain a reputation for integrity, members must make a stand against the exaggerated claims of a minority. Captain John Smith, founder of Virginia, in 1609, wrote in his diary: "We were born into this world not for ourselves but to help others. If our rising generation were taught this as their first aim in church and school, the world would be a happier place to live in. Self is the root of most of our troubles—national, political and domestic. Selfless service for others gives the best line to peace and happiness."

I suggest that this quotation might well be adopted for the cover of "L.G.S." with a more suitable design (forgive the irrelevance) than the bilious and chaotic creation which offended our Wiltshire Branch.

D. J. PRICE.

Uniformity Needed

I HEARTILY endorse the remarks of "Clockwatcher." The standard of measurement of time should be made uniform. Either the popular measurement of including the lunch hour is wrong, or the practice of not including it (as in the local government service) is wrong. A radio announcement that the NALGO Conference unanimously desired a 38-hour week gave a false impression—the immediate reaction of the man in the street is "38 hours a week—why work at all?" He does not realise that this is exclusive of lunch hours and that the 43 hours of the civil service includes lunch hours. This matter should be put right forthwith.

"FAIR-PLAY."

STANDARD CONDITIONS UNFAIR?

Under 21's Protest

IT is time NALGO looked into the position of corporation machine operators under 21 years of age. It is no advantage to work hard and get on; you can be a shorthand-typist, junior clerk, or an errand girl and still get the same money, and service conditions. At one time you had extra annual leave after five years' service; now you must wait until you are 21. Is it fair that people over 21 should walk into the council offices and get privileges while the under 21s with more than five years' service have to wait? Come on NALGO! How about giving the younger people something to work for?

P.M.T.

The Charter already provides for additional increments in recognition of special merit or ability. The National Joint Council has decided that the General Division may be applied without strict reference to age, and with regard to ability, provided that not less than the rate for age is paid. P.M.T. will herself be 21 some day, and will enjoy the extra three days' holiday.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CRISIS

Major Roads Not Affected

I AGREE wholeheartedly with the opinions expressed in your leading article on the crisis of Local Government, but on a point of fact I would point out that main roads did not, as you say, pass in 1946 to the Ministry of Transport. The 1946 Act relates to trunk roads, and refers to the making of an additional mileage of trunk roads to that referred to in the 1936 Act.

Under these two Acts, the Minister of Transport becomes the highway authority for the trunk roads set out in the Acts only, the position with regard to other highways remaining the same as under the Local Government Act, 1929. County councils and most other claiming authorities are given agency powers and carry out all works on trunk roads as agents for the Minister. This arrangement has, I think, been satisfactory and merely means that the Minister has a co-ordinating power with regard to trunk roads, which he has not necessarily got with regard to other highways.

ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR.

PHILOSOPHY OF WAGE CLAIMS

An "Ancient Fallacy"

WHAT glaring mis-statements of fact do our colleagues commit to paper when they essay the impossible task of philosophising on wages and equality!

"If everyone had an increase of wage," says F. C. MARRIOTT in the September Journal, "none would be better off." If he wishes to see this ancient fallacy scientifically exploded, let him read Marx, whom he so casually mentions—in "Value, Price, and Profit," published in 1859 and yet to be disproved!

The value of the "best" theological opinions in relation to the enlightened minority's struggle for equality I do not pretend to understand. The former is based on phantasms, the latter on a scientific study and understanding of the historical, economic evolution of society. Let F. C. Marriott's outlook gain many adherents amongst NALGO members and our Association will rapidly become as potent an organisation for advancement as the "Flat-earthers" society!

H. J. GREW.

Is Our Standard a Low One?

PERICAPS Mr. Marriott would have been happier had he lived in the days of religious persecution, when high moral conviction and willingness to be burnt at the stake were thought to be of more importance than mere good living.

What should be emphasised is that local government as a whole is on a comparatively low wage standard. People are required to pass full degrees before they can reach a salary which many unqualified people can attain elsewhere without sacrificing personal liberty, eyesight, and good health.

Middlesex C.C. T. J. ARROWSMITH.

Inquiry does not support the contention that local government is on a comparatively low wage standard, and we should be interested to learn where unqualified people can attain comparable salaries for similar work in similar conditions.

SUNDAY STUDY COURSES

Protest on Religious Grounds

I DESIRE formally to protest against the inclusion of Sunday in the days chosen for the Metropolitan area education committee's courses. I object on what are usually known as religious grounds, though I hardly expect my view to be shared by the majority of members.

It is not in extremely bad taste for a national association of local government officers, responsible for the affairs of a professionally Christian country, to utilise the English Sunday for affairs of this kind? Further, is it not incredible folly, from a physical, mental, and spiritual standpoint, to "set the pace" for a seven-day week?

Windsor R.D.C. W. H. ROWSELL.

B. & O. CHRISTMAS CARDS

"Blea Tarn" in Technicolor!

AS one who has visited Blea Tarn a hundred times and more, surely a view of it in its more natural colouring is preferable to the common gorgeous Technicolor of the Benevolent Fund Christmas card. What do other—and especially Northern—members think?

2, Queen's Road, Windsor. A. W. MASON.

The criticised card is reproduced—in monochrome, alas!—on page 208.

A NALGO DIARY

Members Star in Festival and Film: Three Fine Exhibitions: Telling the Citizen

HOW many of the thousands who visited the recent Edinburgh Festival of Music and Drama, or of the millions throughout the world who enjoyed the broadcasts of it, realised I wonder, that it was to local government officers—officials of Edinburgh corporation—that they owed much of their pleasure? Although the promoters of the Festival, incorporated as the Edinburgh Festival Society, included the Arts Council, British Council, Scottish Tourist Board, and prominent individuals, besides the Corporation, the bulk of the administrative work was carried out by local officers.

Honorary secretary of the Festival Society is JOHN REID, city social services officer and a former president of the Edinburgh branch; its honorary treasurer is J. D. IMRIE, city chamberlain (and a former member of the N A L G O Reconstruction Committee); its honorary solicitor is JOHN STORRAR, town clerk. Throughout the year, members of the social services staff have been preparing for the Festival. Every available accommodation within forty miles of the city was booked, with the result that thousands of visitors were comfortably housed during their stay; all the financial work was done by the city chamberlain's staff; and, when no private firm could be found to feed the many visitors to the Festival Club, the city catering staff did the job. NALGO's contribution was recognised when the Association's President, P. H. HARROLD, and his wife, were invited to add their names to the festival Club's visitors' book.

Officers on the Screen

WE have had many films about the local government service: at last we have one about the local government officer. Entitled—not too happily—"In the Dark," it was directed, photographed, and produced by W. F. BROOME, librarian of Lambeth's central library (and one-time secretary of the Metropolitan district photographic section) for display at the borough's recent exhibition.

The film was shown continuously throughout the exhibition as part of a stand describing what the local government officer does for his pay. Opening with an "Indignant Ratepayer" penning a vitriolic letter to the local paper after reading of a "Bonus Rise for London NALGO," it shows the council's public relations officer, A. EDEN GREEN, inviting him to see the staff at work and judge for himself whether they are worthy of their hire. After watching the activities of food and sanitary inspectors, engineers, library assistants—two of whom are seen in the "still" from the film

reproduced below—housing officers, and others, he writes to the paper again—this time as "Indignant Ratepayer Converted."

Another of the many highlights of the exhibition—one of the best I have ever seen—was three telephone receivers which, when lifted, spoke in the voices of HERBERT MORRISON, Lord President of the Council, and of the mayor and town clerk of Lambeth. Mr. Morrison told chattily of how he had his first civic lesson whilst sitting in the visitors' gallery of Lambeth town hall.

Wolverhampton's Centenary

DURING the same week another first-rate exhibition was in progress in Wolverhampton (P.R.O., F. AVERY) as part of the borough's centenary celebrations. This impressed all who saw it by its floral decorations, wealth of working models, paper sculpture, and lavish colouring. One model showed water—containing impurities shown to visitors through microscope—being pumped out of a bore hole, and then put through the purifying process. Another showed common causes of fire; the electric iron left switched on; the light socket carrying too many plugs; the celluloid doll near the fire. The education stand had potters at work, children making toys, and youths operating lathes. The exhibition, made by Ultra Displays, Ltd., also contained a special N A L G O stand and part of the "Health of the People Exhibition."

Wallasey, Too

FROM Wallasey, also, I have had glowing reports of the civic week exhibition held there in August. So great was the attendance—half the borough's 100,000 inhabitants turned out—that long queues formed, doors had to be closed to prevent overcrowding, and closing time had to be extended from eight to ten p.m. Films and visits by special buses to gas undertakings, fire stations, and day nurseries were all highly popular, as also was a radar screen and radio telephone apparatus enabling visitors to follow the progress of the corporation's ferry boats on the river.

Battle of Britain Hero

THE Association was honoured by the selection of Wing Commander R. Berry, O.B.E., D.S.O., D.F.C., to bear the R.A.F. Ensign at the Battle of Britain service in Westminster Abbey on Sept. 19. Wing-Commander Berry is one of NALGO's war heroes. Joining the R.A.F. from the treasurer's department at Hull, he became a leading fighter pilot, personally destroying 17 enemy aircraft and sharing in the destruction of several more. He received the O.B.E. in the

1946 Honours list and remained in the R.A.F., where he is now flying jet Meteors.

Manchester Leads Again

MANCHESTER citizens have now a better opportunity probably than any in the world to follow the proceedings and plans of their council. On sale each month, price 1s., are sets of "Council Papers," comprising a summary of committees' proceedings, minutes of the previous council meeting, and the summons and agenda for the next. A note explaining the purpose of the papers and procedure at a council meeting completes the set, which is packed in an envelope bearing a photograph of the council in

Ancillaries Featured in Colour Supplement

Next month's journal will include an attractive four-page full colour supplement, issued by the NALGO Insurance Department, which will illustrate the various benefits offered by Logomia, the NALGO Provident and Building Societies, and the Association's Special Activities—holiday centres, Continental holidays, colours, and the like.

session. This latest product of Manchester's Information Department—always a centre of fertile thought and activity in public relations—is, I am told, selling like hot cakes.

First Road Safety Committee

NEWS of another precedent comes from Coventry, where the council has set up what is believed to be the first standing committee in the country on road safety. To this committee has been transferred many of the council's functions which have a bearing on road safety, such as the provision of islands, car parks, warning signs, pedestrian crossings, and even street lighting.

Most attractive of its activities is the Courtesy Club, whose objects include encouraging good road manners amongst all road users; assisting in the prevention of road accidents; and acting as a medium between citizens and council for formulating, developing, and exchanging new ideas on road safety. Its secretary is the road safety officer, M. J. MILES—who, incidentally, was one of the first branch P.R.O.s to be appointed, before the war and for many years edited Coventry's branch magazine.

"Internal" P.R.

MOST ambitious lecture programme I have yet seen has been arranged by Lewisham branch for its members. The course consists of twelve lectures on London government, to be given on alternate Fridays between October 1 and March 4, and the speakers include such outstanding figures as HERBERT MORRISON, M.P., Lord President of the Council, JOHN EDWARDS, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, ARTHUR SKEFFINGTON, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Pensions, W. ERIC JACKSON, assistant clerk, L.C.C., and J. H. WARREN, general secretary of N A L G O, in addition to local chief officers.

General Secretary Honoured

THE general secretary, incidentally, has been further honoured by an invitation from the Colonial Secretary—which he has accepted—to serve on a local government advisory panel, "for the purpose of securing the best advice available in this country in the application of United Kingdom experience in local government to Colonial conditions, and to African conditions in particular."

"PROgress" Again

THE autumn number of "PROgress"—NALGO's bulletin of public relations—is now available, and is packed with articles and news of value to all interested in its absorbing and many-sided subjects. A special feature is a list of films—the most comprehensive yet prepared—on local government and the public services, supported by an article on running a film show by an officer of the C.O.I. "PROgress" is obtainable from Headquarters at 6d. a copy, or 2s. per annum, post free.

Another N.E.C. Resignation

YET another member of the N.E.C. has resigned after only three months' service. He is B. HEPTINSTALL, who has been appointed assistant labour relations officer, Southern District, B.E.A. His resignation also leaves a vacancy



THE LIBRARY STAFF AT WORK—from the Lambeth film

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I STOOD ALONE



A PSYCHO-ANALYST would no doubt trace the inferiority complex from which I suffer to an incident in my early youth, when I came suddenly upon some small girls of my acquaintance. They were playing a game known as "Insults," which consists of taking turn about to chalk nasty remarks about each other on the pavement.

After all the more commonplace efforts such as *You are a greedy pig, You are a dirty thing, there came the crowning insult, You love Tobias...*

My feelings then, so far as I remember, were akin to those which I experienced recently on discovering that I was the sole remaining member of the local N A L G O branch. "What a wonderful chance," the less discerning reader will say, "to vote yourself into all the offices and transfer the funds to your personal use."

How little such a reader knows of human nature! For here was I, the only one of the staff for whom, apparently, the nation had no need. First Sackbutt had been transferred, along with his work, to the Ministry of National Insurance; then Betty, by virtue of some unexplained coincidence, had found herself a job in the same department. Rufus had applied for and obtained a post as local establishment officer to the Electricity Board. George and Daffy had gone over to the Ministry of Health, he because of his work, and she because of "all those lovely young doctors." And finally the Boss, having been given an appointment as Advisory Officer on In-combustible Combustibles (Coal Division) to the Ministry of Fuel and Power, had taken Miss Gymbol with him as his secretary.

Alone in the office, I took stock of myself to see why I alone had been left to the tender mercies of the local authority. Alas, the only point in my favour seemed to be that I had been in the job all these years without getting the sack....

"Mr. Tobias!" My mournful thoughts were interrupted by no less a person than Alderman Jove. He was breathless from having run up all the stairs from the council chamber to the attic in which our offices are to be found. "Mr. Tobias, we are in your hands. Your attendance is respectfully requested at an emergency meeting which we have called to consider the problem of the exodus of our staff, with the exception of your most valuable self."

Fired by my unique position, I made an eloquent speech to the assembled council on the reason for the departure of their staff. "For years," I said, "you have consistently underpaid us. You have grudged A.P.T. status to the important position occupied by our late—I mean ex-Boss. You have expected a first-class Public Negligence Officer for a grading which many an authority would have hesitated to afford its office cat. I shall not enlarge upon the post which I myself have filled so ably, though utterly without any qualification whatsoever. But the suffragette grandmother of the Boss's secretary would perform revolutions in her place of interment were she aware of the miserable emolument which you bestowed on her descendant"....

The council, putty in my hands, agreed to an improved grading here and a bonus there, and transferred the Boss's job far beyond the topmost A.P.T. At last I expressed myself satisfied and received an expression of the council's gratitude reverently tendered by Alderman Jove. "We shall advertise tomorrow," he said, "for staff to fill the vacancies."

"That will not be necessary," I smiled benignly, "as I intend to perform all the duties myself. A simple arithmetical computation—of which, I confess, I do not at the moment feel capable—will show the total salary to which I am entitled for each of the different posts." Then I went out to celebrate my improved fortunes—and plan a few changes in office routine. No longer would I be the servant of the servants of the ratepayers. The ratepayers would dance to my tune or else they'd find themselves without any local government service.

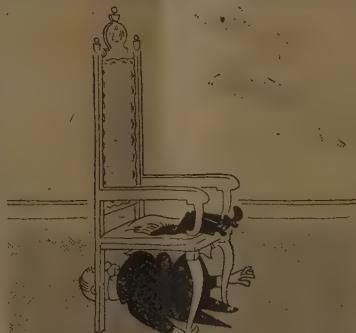
"That'll make 'em sit up!" I cried at large to the Local Government Arms. "This will have wide repercussions—national repercussions. Local authorities everywhere will upgrade everybody. I shall attain the status of a Mop-puddle Tarty or a—hic—Boiton Wanderer"....

I was late at the office next morning. The first person I bumped into was Rufus. "Hey, what's the matter, you've gone," I blinked, wondering if last night had been a dream of wish-fulfilment. "I had," he admitted, "but I saw the advertisement in this morning's paper and came back at once."

Behind him were the serried ranks of Betty, Daffy, George, Sackbutt and Miss Gymbol. Then the Boss hurried portentously out of his room. "Come, come, Tobias," he said briskly. "I can't have you reporting for duty at this hour—8.55 sharp, if you please. Now sharpen my pencils and take these letters to the post—and, Tobias—." "Yes, sir," I gulped. "An officer's first duty is to the authority he serves. Kindly do not allow private celebration to interfere with public duty. That is all."

If any psycho-analyst tries to tell me that my inferiority complex is due to something that happened in my childhood, I shall sock him. It is due to nothing more nor less than the fact that in the brief hour of my triumph the only position which I failed to get upgraded was *my own*.

This Local Government!



"Councillor H. has had eight years' service with this Council and has passed through the Chair"—extract from an election notice for which five shillings goes to R. SHAW BATHFORD, Ross-on-Wye.

AT RANDOM

By "Hyperion"

Work Is Best

We'd shorten our working hours if we could think of anything to do with our leisure that was as interesting and inexpensive as work—William Feather Magazine.

How To Be Happy Though Furious

Questionnaires used to make me sore;
Red tape used to turn me grey.
But I don't get furious any more—
I just stay that way.

Grounds For Divorce

A Wisconsin woman told the court in seeking a divorce that the retired naval officer she married insisted that they sleep in a hammock. In 23 years of marriage she had fallen out 16 times and felt she was getting too old for such insecurity. Decree granted.

Topical Comment

Global war and global peace,
Global measures for lend-lease;
Nothing now delays the plan
But the birth of Global Man.

Note For Old Uns

We ought to pay more attention to the future than to the past, because every one of us is going to spend the rest of his life in it.—Widen News.

Opportunity

When Mrs. Gorm (Aunt Eloise) Was stung to death by savage bees, Her husband (Prebendary Gorm) Put on his veil and took the swarm. He's publishing a book, next May, On "How to Make Bee-Keeping Pay." —Harry L. Graham.

More Progress Brewing

Motto hanging in the General Motors' laboratory in Detroit, U.S.A., "The price of progress is trouble."

Why Pepys Appeals

Evelyn's Journal
Bears few internal
Evidences of naughty lapses,
Which perhaps is
Why heaps
Prefer Pepys.

Brevities

You never can tell about women, and if you can, you shouldn't.—Bruce Patterson.

Happiness comes of the capacity to feel deeply, to enjoy simply, to think freely, to risk life, to be needed.—Storm Jameson.

The great use of life is to speed it for something that will outlast it.—William James.

Enough of this circle that swings from "Die in order to live" to "live in order to die."—Ella K. Maillart.

I love money; just to be in the room with a millionaire makes me less forlorn.—Logan Pearsall Smith.

The Gentle Art of Understatement.

1. Mr. REGISTRAR FRIEND (at Clerkenwell county court): "I find it difficult to assess his capacity to repay. He says he is an amateur stewed eel cooker and as an amateur he would lose his status if he earned money. But he also admitted he is a lorry driver. Now he says he is on the dole. He also says he has a car."

2. There is a story of a station-master who reported a murder in a train in the following terms: "The murderer entered the compartment from the platform, stabbed the victim savagely five or six times, and emerged on to the line from the opposite door—thus infringing the company's regulations."—Herbert Dingle.

But For the Grace of N A L G O

"Last week several persons of the Guild of Local Officers, being gathered at the Sign of the Blue Anaconda for the purpose of petitioning Parliament praying their emoluments to be raised by one shilling a month, they were set upon by a riotous mob of taxpayers and dragged to the river, from which many of them were removed by the Watch in a stinking condition."—Extract from Dublin paper of 1728.

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SCOTTISH NOTES

Spread of Central Control Denounced at Record Scottish Summer School

LOCAL authorities' need for freedom from central control in discharging the duties left to them was discussed at NALGO's Scottish summer school at the University of St. Andrews on August 21 to 28 by a record number of students.

"It will be nothing short of tragedy," declared J. URE PRIMROSE, lord provost, Perth, opening the school, "if the spirit of voluntary service and initiative which, in the past, has been so marked a feature of local government, is weakened by central control."

He quoted from a recent circular from the Department of Health for Scotland concerning the new Children Act which could, he contended, be applied to almost all other departments. The circular stated:

Legislative provisions can provide only the machinery . . . The degree to which success will be attained . . . will depend on the use which is made of the new legislative provisions, on the active and imaginative interest of local authorities, and on the choice of the right people for the work of children's officers and their staffs.

He thought that the machine would work all the more efficiently were it operated by those on the spot with knowledge and experience of the needs of the community in which they lived and served. Unnecessary central control would be bound to clog the machine and slow it down. The best results could be achieved by leaving local authorities alone, ably assisted as they were by highly skilled officers, to get on with the job.

To this, E. W. HANCOCK, an assistant secretary to the Department of Health for Scotland, added a word of reproach for the "superior" civil servant who supposed that his position entitled him to lay down the law. Without the people in local government, the civil servant was worse than useless.

P. H. HARROLD, NALGO's President, emphasised that membership of the Association was open to all officers in the service from the highest to the lowest. His personal ideal for the Association was a closely knit organisation of professional administrators who, by their skill, imagination, and initiative, would well serve the public and justify their place in the service.

overheads without the compensating advantages of greater production.

A huge undertaking meant control from a distant centre. Remote control was all very well in blowing up bridges and destroying communications, but in maintaining communications local control alone would serve the most desirable end.

Local authorities could not continue to be agents if they lacked financial resources. Such cities as Edinburgh, such large burghs as Perth, and such counties as Peebles, felt keenly the results of the latest effort to redistribute Government grants. The grants were now distributed on the assumption that there were rich areas and poor areas and that the latter had greater claims for financial support. Such an assumption, Mr. Imrie complained, might encourage inefficiency and put a premium on large expenditures. Yet another effect was to deny a share in the general aid grant to one-third of the population of Scotland.

Some Duties Lost—Some Gained

It must not be assumed that because the control of hospitals and the poor law had been transferred to the state, local authorities' resources were adequate to the situation. The transfer had been a distinct financial advantage to them, but it had to be remembered that they had assumed duties as well as lost them. In an ideal state, local authorities would have stable and adequate sources of revenue raised by the exertions of the local people themselves. Heavy dependence on Government grant was not a good thing. It encouraged central control and the best ends were served by local interest and local control.

Central control, not of local authorities but of public boards, was discussed by JOHN A. MACK, lecturer on citizenship, Glasgow University, who asked what safeguards could be imposed on the "public board socialism" of Britain. The more powerful the state became the more dependent it became, he submitted, on the co-operation of the people. For example, the national health scheme relied for its success on the willing co-operation of the medical and dental professions and hospital services. We had in recent years witnessed the phenomenon of public boards being set up for broadcasting, electricity, transport, hydro-electricity, coal, cotton, the Bank of England, and so on.

When a public board was asked to organise an industry in the public interest, the question arose as to how that board should be accountable to the community. Was it to be subject to parliamentary questions answerable by a Minister? Or to a special parliamentary committee? That was a problem which had yet to be solved.

Combating Public Apathy

Some of the reasons for the apathy in local affairs and the decline of local control were discussed by NORMAN ROGERS, NALGO's assistant P.R.O. Hitherto, he said, we had made woefully little effort to prepare children for local political life. As a result, the average citizen looked upon local government as some complicated administrative machine—hardly distinguishable from the civil service—which ate more and more into his pocket. The citizen's mind was full of suspicion and prejudice; he suspected that the officials were making soft jobs for themselves and that councillors were "in on some racket." Few realised that civic responsibility lay upon their own shoulders.

Local authorities had themselves done little to stimulate the citizen's interest in their work. They had surrounded it, complex and intricate as it was, with a cotton-wool fog of secrecy. They had been shy, even scared, of letting the pressman get an eyebrow into the council chamber, let alone into the committee room. Few attempts had been made to ascertain the citizen's views. Could we therefore be surprised at the prevalence of apathy?

Such apathy could be dispelled, he declared, only through publicity and education. Civics should form as natural a part of the school curriculum as history and geography. The child should not be left to pick up his civic knowledge as best he might.

The future of the social welfare department in the face of new legislation was discussed by WILLIAM C. DUNDAS, county clerk, Selkirkshire.

It was at the parting of the ways, he said. The order had changed, but the people remained. The department still had left on its hands the misfits that the State was not prepared to care for.

Under the new Children Act it would be the duty of the local authority to appoint a children's officer, and that officer might not, without the consent of the Secretary of State, be employed in any other capacity by the local authority, whether as social welfare officer or probation officer. That was all very well in the cities, but difficult in the sparsely-populated areas, many of which could not afford to employ a full-time officer on that work alone. Were several authorities to combine in making an appointment, the officer they appointed might have to administer a vast but thinly-populated area, to do which he would spend much of his time in motor-car.

The children's officer could safely be entrusted with outside work under the Nurseries and Child Minders Regulation Act, and analogous duties. Why then was he to be prohibited from doing so?

Other speakers at the school were W. HUTTON, vice-chairman, South West Scotland electricity board, on the consolidation of the many public general statutes relating to local government in Scotland, and DONALD MACRAE, general manager Glasgow city improvements department, on current housing management problems.

The Civil Servant's Response

HIGHLIGHT of the toasts that followed the School's opening dinner was Mr. Hancock's response on behalf of the guests.

Couched in the style of the parliamentary draftsman, it ran :

I, EDMUND WILLIAM HANCOCK, in the exercise of the powers conferred upon me by the guests herein assembled and of all other powers enabling me in that behalf, hereby make the following Declaration :

The words "guests" means human beings, whether male or female, who on this 21st day of August, 1948, within the MacIntosh Hall, St. Andrews, have partaken of any bodily sustenance, solid or liquid without being called upon to defray the appropriate fee, as laid down by the NALGO (Scottish District) for their members.

"Human beings" shall be held to include not only actual members of local authorities, but for this occasion only, and without establishing any precedent, shall even include Civil Servants or other parasites upon the body politic.

NOW, THEREFORE, I declare that the guests herein assembled do convey to the aforesaid Scottish District their grateful thanks for the hospitality shown them by the said Scottish District, and request them to arrange for similar functions at regular intervals, and, to repeat their invitations to the aforesaid guests, to attend all such functions :

PROVIDED ALWAYS, that the said guests shall not be taken in this respect as committing themselves to anything more than to enjoy themselves at the expense of the said Scottish District AND PROVIDED ALSO IN PARTICULAR, that the aforesaid EDMUND WILLIAM HANCOCK shall not again be called upon to take any public part in the proceedings.

Dispute Over S.W. Council To Be Set Up Soon

STEPS are now being taken to set up the Electricity district joint-council for South West Scotland. It was reported last month to be held up by disagreement between the Clerical and Administrative Workers' Union and the Association on the proportional representation of either union on the staff side of that council. Though admitting NALGO's majority membership in the area, the C. and A.W.U. claimed, contrary to established trade union practice, that no one union should hold the principal staff side appointments.

The dispute has, however, now been brought to a conclusion. NALGO will have six of the ten staff side seats; the C. and A.W.U. three; and the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, one.



Referring to the services pioneered by and now lost to local authorities, J. H. WARREN, general secretary, declared that, whether they agreed or not with the transitions that were taking place, they could not fail to detect a certain loss in the process. It was still "a very great question" as to whether they could secure in the new services the local co-ordination in administration and economy represented by the parish pump. All the same, their job was to see that if it were possible it were done.

A similar theme was adopted by J. D. IMRIE, city chamberlain, Edinburgh, lecturing on local government finance. In his view, the continued increase in the number of regional boards could make only for increased administrative costs. The worship of size, characteristic of this generation, might well mean a continuous addition to

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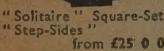
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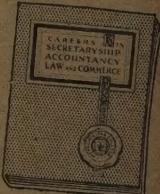
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